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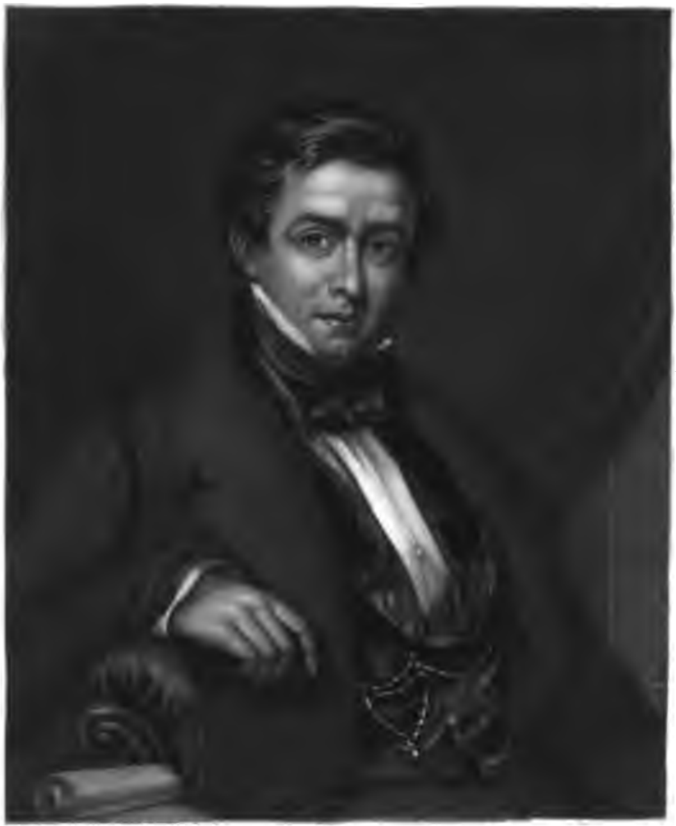

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TALFOURD'S MISCELLANIES.

ON BRITISH NOVELS AND ROMANCES, INTRODUCTORY TO A SERIES OF CRITICISMS ON THE LIVING NOVELISTS.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

We regard the authors of the best novels and romances as among the truest benefactors of their species. Their works have often conveyed, in the most attractive form, lessons of the most genial wisdom. But we do not prize them so much in reference to their immediate aim, or any individual traits of nobleness with which they may inform the thoughts, as for their general tendency to break up that cold and debasing selfishness with which the souls of so large a portion of mankind are encrusted. They give to a vast class, who by no means would be carried beyond the most contracted range of emotion, an interest in things out of themselves, and a perception of grandeur and of beauty, of which otherwise they might ever have lived unconscious. Pity for fictitious sufferings is, indeed, very inferior to that sympathy with the universal heart of man which inspires real self-sacrifice; but it is better even to be moved by its tenderness, than wholly to be ignorant of the joy of natural tears. How many are there for whom poesy has no charm, and who have derived only from romances those glimpses of disinterested heroism and ideal beauty, which alone "make them less forlorn," in their busy career! The good housewife, who is employed all her life in the severest drudgery, has yet some glimmerings of a state and dignity above her station and age, and some dim vision of meek, angelic suffering, when she thinks of the well-thumbed volume of Clarissa Harlowe, which she found, when a girl, in some old recess, and read, with breathless eagerness, at stolen times and moments of hasty joy. The careworn lawyer or politician, encircled with all kinds of petty anxieties, thinks of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, which he devoured in his joyful school-days, and is once more young, and innocent, and happy. If the sternest puritan were acquainted with Parson Adams, or with Dr. Primrose, he could not hate the clergy. If novels are not the deepest teachers of humanity, they have, at least, the widest range. They lend to genius "lighter wings to fly." They are read where Milton and Shakspeare are only talked of, and where even their names are never heard. They nestle gently beneath the covers of unconscious sofas, are read by fair and glistening eyes in moments snatched from repose, and beneath counters and shop-boards minister delights "secret, sweet, and precious." It is possible that, in particular instances, their effects may be baneful; but, on the whole, we are persuaded they are good. The world is not in danger of becoming too romantic. The golden threads of poesy are not too thickly or too closely interwoven with the ordinary web of existence. Sympathy is the first great lesson which man should learn. It will be ill for him if he proceeds no farther; if his emotions are but excited to roll back on his heart, and to be fostered in luxurious quiet. But unless he learns to feel for things in which he has no personal interest, he can achieve nothing generous or noble. This lesson is in reality the universal moral of all excellent romances. How mistaken are those miserable reasoners who object to them as giving "false pictures of life—of purity too glossy and ethereal—of friendship too deep and confiding—of love which does not shrink at the approach of ill, but looks on tempests and is never shaken," because with these the world too rarely blossoms! Were these things visionary and unreal, who would break the spell, and bid the delicious enchantment vanish? The soul will not be the worse for thinking too well of its kind, or believing that the highest excellence is within the reach of its exertions. But these things are not unreal; they are shadows, indeed, in themselves; but they are shadows cast from objects stately and eternal. Man can never imagine that which has no foundation in his nature. The virtues he conceives are not the mere pageantry of his thought. We feel their truth—not their historic or individual truth—but their universal truth, as reflexes of human energy and power. It would be enough for us to prove that the imaginative glories which are shed around our being, are far brighter than "the light of common day," which mere vulgar experience in the course of the world diffuses. But, in truth, that radiance is not merely of the fancy, nor are its influences lost when it ceases immediately to shine on our path. It is holy and prophetic. The best joys of childhood—its boundless aspirations and gorgeous dreams, are the sure indications of the nobleness of its final heritage. All the softenings of evil to the moral vision by the gentleness of fancy, are proofs that evil itself shall perish. Our yearnings after ideal beauty show that the home of the soul which feels them, is in a lovelier world. And when man describes high virtues, and instances of nobleness, which rarely light on earth; so sublime that they expand our imaginations beyond their former compass, yet so human that they make our hearts gush with delight; he discovers feelings in his own breast, and awakens sympathies in ours, which shall assuredly one day have real and stable objects to rest on!

The early times of England—unlike those of Spain—were not rich in chivalrous romances. The imagination seems to have been chilled by the manners of the Norman conquerors. The domestic contests for the disputed throne, with their intrigues, battles, and executions, have none of that rich, poetical interest, which attended the struggles for the Holy Sepulchre. Nor, in the golden age of English genius, were there any very remarkable works of pure fiction. Since that period to the present day, however, there has been a rich succession of novels and romances, each increasing the stores of innocent delight, and shedding on human life some new tint of tender colouring.

The novels of Richardson are at once among the grandest and the most singular creations of human genius. They combine an accurate acquaintance with the freest libertinism, and the sternest professions of virtue—a sporting with vicious casuistry, and the deepest horror of free-thinking—the most stately ideas of paternal authority, and the most elaborate display of its abuses. Prim and stiff, almost without parallel, the author perpetually treads on the very borders of indecorum, but with a solemn and assured step, as if certain that he could never fall. "The precise, strait-laced Richardson," says Mr. Lamb in one of the profound and beautiful notes to his specimens, "has strengthened vice from the mouth of Lovelace, with entangling sophistries, and abstruse pleas against her adversary virtue, which Sedley, Villiers, and Rochester wanted depth of libertinism sufficient to have invented." He had, in fact, the power of making any set of notions, however fantastical, appear as "truths of holy writ," to his readers. This he did by the authority with which he disposed of all things, and by the infinite minuteness of his details. His gradations are so gentle, that we do not at any one point hesitate to follow him, and should descend with him to any depth before we perceived that our path had been unequal. By the means of this strange magic, we become anxious for the marriage of Pamela with her base master; because the author has so imperceptibly wrought on us the belief of an awful distance between the rights of an esquire and his servant, that our imaginations regard it in the place of all moral distinctions. After all, the general impression made on us by his works is virtuous. Clementina is to the soul a new and majestic image, inspired by virtue and by love, which raises and refines its conceptions. She has all the depth and intensity of the Italian character, with all the purity of an angel. She is at the same time one of the grandest of tragic heroines, and the divinest of religious enthusiasts. Clarissa alone is above her. Clementina steps statelily in her very madness, amidst "the pride, pomp, and circumstance" of Italian nobility; Clarissa is triumphant, though violated, deserted, and encompassed by vice and infamy. Never can we forget that amazing scene, in which, on the effort of her mean seducer to renew his outrages, she appears in all the radiance of mental purity, among the wretches assembled to witness his triumph, where she startles them by her first appearance, as by a vision from above; and holding the penknife to her breast, with her eyes lifted to heaven, prepares to die, if her craven destroyer advances, striking the vilest with deep awe of goodness, and walking placidly, at last, from the circle of her foes, none of them daring to harm her! How pathetic, above all other pathos in the world, are those snatches of meditation which she commits to the paper, in the first delirium of her wo! How delicately imagined are her preparations for that grave in which alone she can find repose! Cold must be the hearts of those who can conceive them as too elaborate, or who can venture to criticise them. In this novel all appears most real; we feel enveloped, like Don Quixote, by a thousand threads; and like him, would we rather remain so for ever, than break one of their silken fibres. Clarissa Harlowe is one of the books which leave us different beings from those which they find us. "Sadder and wiser" do we arise from its perusal.

Yet when we read Fielding's novels after those of Richardson, we feel as if a stupendous pressure were removed from our souls. We seem suddenly to have left a palace of enchantment, where we have past through long galleries filled with the most gorgeous images, and illumined by a light not quite human nor yet quite divine, into the fresh air, and the common ways of this "bright and breathing world." We travel on the high road of humanity, yet meet in it pleasanter companions, and catch more delicious snatches of refreshment, than ever we can hope elsewhere to enjoy. The mock heroic of Fielding, when he condescends to that ambiguous style, is scarcely less pleasing than its stately prototype. It is a sort of spirited defiance to fiction, on the behalf of reality, by one who knew full well all the strongholds of that nature which he was defending. There is not in Fielding much of that which can properly be called ideal—if we except the character of Parson Adams; but his works represent life as more delightful than it seems to common experience, by disclosing those of its dear immunities, which we little think of, even when we enjoy them. How delicious are all his refreshments at all his inns! How vivid are the transient joys of his heroes, in their checkered course—how full and overflowing are their final raptures! His Tom Jones is quite unrivalled in plot, and is to be rivalled only in his own works for felicitous delineation of character. The little which we have told us of Allworthy, especially that which relates to his feelings respecting his deceased wife, makes us feel for him, as for one of the best and most revered friends of our childhood. Was ever the "soul of goodness in things evil" better disclosed, than in the scruples and the dishonesty of Black George, that tenderest of gamekeepers, and truest of thieves? Did ever health, good-humour, frankheartedness, and animal spirits hold out so freshly against vice and fortune as in the hero? Was ever so plausible a hypocrite as Blifil, who buys a Bible of Tom Jones so delightfully, and who, by his admirable imitation of virtue, leaves it almost in doubt, whether, by a counterfeit so dexterous, he did not merit some share of her rewards? Who shall gainsay the cherry lips of Sophia Western? The story of Lady Bellaston we confess to be a blemish. But if there be any vice left in the work, the fresh atmosphere diffused over all its scenes, will render it innoxious. Joseph Andrews has far less merit as a story—but it depicts Parson Adams, whom it does the heart good to think on. He who drew this character, if he had done nothing else, would not have lived in vain. We fancy we can see him with his torn cassock, (in honour of his high profession,) his volumes of sermons, which we really wish had been printed, and his Æschylus, the best of all the editions of that sublime tragedian! Whether he longs after his own sermons against vanity—or is absorbed in the romantic tale of the fair Leonora—or uses his ox-like fists in defence of the fairer Fanny, he equally imbodies in his person, "the homely beauty of the good old cause," of high thoughts, pure imaginations, and manners unspotted by the world.

Smollet seems to have had more touch of romance than Fielding, but not so profound and intuitive a knowledge of humanity's hidden treasures. There is nothing in his works comparable to Parson Adams; but then, on the other hand, Fielding has not any thing of the kind equal to Strap. Partridge is dry, and hard, compared with this poor barber-boy, with his generous overflowings of affection. Roderick Random, indeed, with its varied delineation of life, is almost a romance. Its hero is worthy of his name. He is the sport of fortune rolled about through the "many ways of wretchedness," almost without resistance, but ever catching those tastes of joy which are everywhere to be relished by those who are willing to receive them. We seem to roll on with him, and get delectably giddy in his company.

The humanity of the Vicar of Wakefield is less deep than that of Roderick Random, but sweeter tinges of fancy are cast over it. The sphere in which Goldsmith's powers moved was never very extensive, but within it he discovered all that was good, and shed on it the tenderest lights of his sympathizing genius. No one ever excelled so much as he in depicting amiable follies and endearing weaknesses. His satire makes us at once smile at and love all that he so tenderly ridicules. The good Vicar's trust in Monogamy, his son's purchase of the spectacles, his own sale of his horse to his solemn admirer at the fair; the blameless vanities of his daughters, and his resignation under his accumulated sorrows, are among the best treasures of memory. The pastoral scenes in this exquisite tale are the sweetest in the world. The scents of the hay-field, and of the blossoming hedgerows, seem to come freshly to our senses. The whole romance is a tenderly-coloured picture, in little, of human nature's most genial qualities.

De Foe is one of the most extraordinary of English authors. His Robinson Crusoe is deservedly one of the most popular of novels. It is usually the first read, and always among the last forgotten. The interest of its scenes in the uninhabited island is altogether peculiar; since there is nothing to develope the character but deep solitude. Man, there, is alone in the world, and can hold communion only with nature, and nature's God. There is nearly the same situation in Philoctetes, that sweetest of the Greek tragedies; but there we only see the poor exile as he is about to leave his sad abode, to which he has become attached, even with a child-like cleaving. In Robinson Crusoe, life is stripped of all its social joys, yet we feel how worthy of cherishing it is, with nothing but silent nature to cheer it. Thus are nature and the soul, left with no other solace, represented in their native grandeur and intense communion. With how fond an interest do we dwell on all the exertions of our fellow-man, cut off from his kind; watch his growing plantations as they rise, and seem to water them with our tears! The exceeding vividness of all the descriptions are more delightful when combined with the loneliness and distance of the scene "placed far amid the melancholy main" in which we become dwellers. We have grown so familiar with the solitude, that the print of man's foot seen in the sand seems to appal us as an awful thing!—The Family Instructor of this author, in which he inculcates weightily his own notions of puritanical demeanour and parental authority, is very curious. It is a strange mixture of narrative and dialogue, fanaticism and nature; but all done with such earnestness that the sense of its reality never quits us. Nothing, however, can be more harsh and unpleasing than the impression which it leaves. It does injustice both to religion and the world. It represents the innocent pleasures of the latter as deadly sins, and the former as most gloomy, austere, and exclusive. One lady resolves on poisoning her husband, and another determines to go to the play, and the author treats both offences with a severity nearly equal!

Far different from this ascetic novel is that best of religious romances, the Fool of Quality. The piety there is at once most deep and most benign. There is much, indeed, of eloquent mysticism, but all evidently most heartfelt and sincere. The yearnings of the soul after universal good and intimate communion with the divine nature were never more nobly shown. The author is most prodigal of his intellectual wealth—"his bounty is as boundless as the sea, his love as deep." He gives to his chief characters riches endless as the spiritual stores of his own heart. It is, indeed, only the last which gives value to the first in his writings. It is easy to endow men with millions on paper, and to make them willing to scatter them among the wretched; but it is the corresponding bounty and exuberance of the author's soul, which here makes the money sterling, and the charity divine. The hero of this romance always appears to our imagination like a radiant vision encircled with celestial glories. The stories introduced in it are delightful exceptions to the usual rule by which such incidental tales are properly regarded as impertinent intrusions. That of David Doubtful is of the most romantic interest, and at the same time steeped in feeling the most profound. But that of Clement and his wife is perhaps the finest. The scene in which they are discovered, having placidly lain down to die of hunger together, in gentle submission to Heaven, depicts a quiescence the most sublime, yet the most affecting. Nothing can be more delightful than the sweetening ingredients in their cup of sorrow. The heroic act of the lady to free herself from her ravisher's grasp, her trial and her triumphant acquittal, have a grandeur above that of tragedy. The genial spirit of the author's faith leads him to exult especially in the repentance of the wicked. No human writer seems ever to have hailed the contrite with so cordial a welcome. His scenes appear overspread with a rich atmosphere of tenderness, which softens and consecrates all things.

We would not pass over, without a tribute of gratitude, Mrs. Radcliffe's wild and wondrous tales. When we read them, the world seems shut out, and we breathe only in an enchanted region, where lover's lutes tremble over placid waters, mouldering castles rise conscious of deeds of blood, and the sad voices of the past echo through deep vaults and lonely galleries. There is always majesty in her terrors. She produces more effect by whispers and slender hints than ever was attained by the most vivid display of horrors. Her conclusions are tame and impotent almost without example. But while her spells actually operate, her power is truly magical. Who can ever forget the scene in the Romance of the Forest, where the marquis, who has long sought to make the heroine the victim of licentious love, after working on her protector, over whom he has a mysterious influence, to steal at night into her chamber, and when his trembling listener expects only a requisition for delivering her into his hands, replies to the question of "then—to-night, my Lord!" "Adelaide *dies*"—or the allusions to the dark veil in the Mysteries of Udolpho—or the stupendous scenes in Spalatro's cottage? Of all romance writers Mrs. Radcliffe is the most romantic.

The present age has produced a singular number of authors of delightful prose fiction, on whom we intend to give a series of criticisms. We shall begin with MACKENZIE, whom we shall endeavour to compare with Sterne, and for this reason we have passed over the works of the latter in our present cursory view of the novelists of other days.

MACKENZIE.

[NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]

ALTHOUGH our veneration for Mackenzie has induced us to commence this series of articles with an attempt to express our sense of his genius, we scarcely know how to criticise its exquisite creations. The feelings which they have awakened within us are too old and too sacred almost for expression. We scarcely dare to scrutinize with a critic's ear, the blending notes of that sad and soft music of humanity which they breathe. We feel as if there were a kind of privacy in our sympathies with them—as though they were a part of ourselves, which strangers knew not—and as if in publicly expressing them, we were violating the sanctities of our own souls. We must recollect, however, that our readers know them as well as we do, and then to dwell with them tenderly on their merits will seem like discoursing of the long-cherished memories of friends we had in common, and of sorrows participated in childhood.

The purely sentimental style in which the tales of Mackenzie are written, though deeply felt by the people, has seldom met with due appreciation from the critics. It has its own genuine and peculiar beauties, which we love the more the longer we feel them. Its consecrations are altogether drawn from the soul. The gentle tinges which it casts on human life are shed, not from the imagination or the fancy, but from the affections. It represents, indeed, humanity as more tender, its sorrows as more gentle, its joys as more abundant than they appear to common observers. But this is not effected by those influences of the imagination which consecrate whatever they touch, which detect the secret analogies of beauty, and bring kindred graces from all parts of nature to heighten the images which they reveal. It affects us rather by casting off from the soul those impurities and littlenesses which it contracts in the world, than by foreign aids. It appeals to those simple emotions which are not the high prerogatives of genius, but which are common to all who are "made of one blood," and partake in one primal sympathy. The holiest feelings, after all, are those which would be the most common if gross selfish ness and low ambition froze not "the genial current of the soul." The meanest and most ungifted have their gentle remembrances of early days. Love has tinged the life of the artisan and the cottager with something of the romantic. The course of none has been along so beaten a road that they remember not fondly some resting-places in their journeys; some turns of their path in which lovely prospects broke in upon them; some soft plats of green refreshing to their weary feet. Confiding love, generous friendship, disinterested humanity, require no recondite learning, no high imagination, to enable an honest heart to appreciate and feel them. Too often, indeed, are the simplicities of nature and the native tendernesses of the soul nipped and chilled by those anxieties which lie on them "like an untimely frost." "The world is too much with us." We become lawyers, politicians, merchants, and forget that we are men, and sink in our transitory vocations that character which is to last for ever. A tale of sentiment—such as those of that honoured veteran whose works we would now particularly remember—awakens all these pulses of sympathy with our kind, of whose beatings we had become almost unconscious. It does honour to humanity by stripping off its artificial disguises. Its magic is not like that by which Arabian enchanters raised up glittering spires, domes, and palaces by a few cabalistic words; but resembles their power to disclose veins of precious ore where all seemed sterile and blasted. It gently puts aside the brambles which overcast the stream of life, and lays it open to the reflections of those delicate clouds which lie above it in the heavens. It shows to us the soft undercourses of feeling, which neither time nor circumstances can wholly stop; and the depth of affection in the soul, which nothing but sentiment itself can fathom. It disposes us to pensive thought—expands the sympathies—and makes all the half-forgotten delights of youth "come back upon our hearts again," to soften and to cheer us.

Too often has the sentiment of which we have spoken been confounded with sickly affectations in a common censure. But no things can be more opposite than the paradoxes of the inferior order of German sentimentalists and the works of a writer like Mackenzie. Real sentiment is the truest, the most genuine, and the most lasting thing on earth. It is more ancient as well as more certain in its operations than the reasoning faculties. We know and feel before we think; we perceive before we compare; we enjoy before we believe. As the evidence of sense is stronger than that of testimony, so the light of our inward eye more truly shows to us the secrets of the heart than the most elaborate process of reason. Riches, honours, power, are transitory—the things which appear, pass away—the shadows of life alone are stable and unchanging. Of the recollections of infancy nothing can deprive us. Love endures, even if its object perishes, and nurtures the soul of the mourner. Sentiment has a kind of divine alchymy, rendering grief itself the source of tenderest thoughts and far-reaching desires, which the sufferer cherishes as sacred treasures. The sorrows over which it sheds its influence are "ill-bartered for the garishness of joy;" for they win us softly from life, and fit us to die smiling. It endures, not only while fortune changes, but while opinions vary, which the young enthusiast fondly hoped would never forsake him. It remains when the unsubstantial pageants of goodliest hope vanish. It binds the veteran to the child by ties which no fluctuations even of belief can alter. It preserves the only identity, save that of consciousness, which man with certainty retains—connecting our past with our present being by delicate ties, so subtle that they vibrate to every breeze of feeling; yet so strong that the tempests of life have not power to break them. It assures us that what we have been we shall be, and that our human hearts shall vibrate with their first sympathies while the species shall endure.

We think that, on the whole, Mackenzie is the first master of this delicious style. Sterne, doubtless, has deeper touches of humanity in some of his works. But there is no sustained feeling—no continuity of emotion—no extended range of thought, over which the mind can brood in his ingenious and fantastical writings. His spirit is far too mercurial and airy to suffer him tenderly to linger over those images of sweet humanity which he discloses. His cleverness breaks the charm which his feeling spreads, as by magic, around us. His exquisite sensibility is ever counteracted by his perceptions of the ludicrous, and his ambition after the strange. No harmonious feeling breathes from any of his pieces. He sweeps "that curious instrument, the human heart," with hurried fingers, calling forth in rapid succession its deepest and its liveliest tones, and making only marvellous discord. His pathos is, indeed, most genuine while it lasts; but the soul is not suffered to cherish the feeling which it awakens. He does not shed, like Mackenzie, one mild light on the path of life; but scatters on it wild coruscations of ever-shifting brightness, which, while they sometimes disclose spots of inimitable beauty, often do but fantastically play over objects dreary and revolting. All in Mackenzie is calm, gentle, harmonious. No play of mistimed wit, no flourish of rhetoric, no train of philosophical speculation, for a moment diverts our sympathy. Each of his best works is like one deep thought, and the impression which it leaves, soft, sweet, and undivided as the summer evening's holiest and latest sigh.

The only exception which we can make to this character, is the *Man of the World*. Here the attempt to obtain intricacy of plot disturbs the emotion which, in the other works of the author, is so harmoniously excited. A tale of sentiment should be most simple. Its whole effect depends on its keeping the tenor of its predominant feeling unbroken. Another defect in this story is, the length of time over which it spreads its narrative. Sindall, alone, connects the two generations which it embraces, and he is too mean and uninteresting thus to appear both as the hero and the chorus. When a story is thus continued from a mother to a daughter, it seems to have no legitimate boundary. The painful remembrances of the former interferes with our interest for the latter, and the present difficulties of the last deprive us of those emotions of fond retrospection, which the fate of the first would otherwise awaken. Still there are in this tale scenes of pathos delicious as any which even the author himself has drawn. The tender pleasure which the *Man of Feeling* excites is wholly without alloy. Its hero is the most beautiful personification of gentleness, patience, and meek sufferings, which the heart can conceive. *Julia de Roubigné*, however, is, on the whole, the most delightful of the author's works. There is, in this tale, enough of plot to keep alive curiosity, and sharpen the interest which the sentiment awakens, without any of those strange turns and perplexing incidents which break the current of sympathy. The diction is in perfect harmony with the subject—"most musical, most melancholy"—with "golden cadences" responsive to the thoughts. There is a plaintive charm in the image presented to us of the heroine, too fair almost to dwell on. How exquisite is the description given of her by her maid, in a letter to her friend, relating to her fatal marriage:—"She was dressed in a white muslin night-gown, with striped lilac and white ribands; her hair was kept in the loose way you used to make me dress it for her at Belville, with two waving curls down one side of her neck, and a braid of little pearls. And to be sure, with her dark, brown locks resting upon it, her bosom looked as pure white as the driven snow. And then her eyes, when she gave her hand to the count! they were cast down, and you might see her eyelashes, like strokes of a pencil, over the white of her skin—the modest gentleness, with a sort of sadness too, as it were, and a gentle heave of her bosom at the same time." And yet, such is the feeling communicated to us by the whole work, that we are ready to believe even this artless picture an inadequate representation of that beauty which we never cease to feel. How natural and tear-moving is the letter of Savillon to his friend, describing the scenes of his early love, and recalling, with intense vividness, all the little circumstances which aided its progress! What an idea, in a single expression, does Julia give of the depth and the tenderness of her affection, when describing herself as taking lessons in drawing from her lover, she says that she felt something from the touch of his hand "not the less delightful from carrying a sort of fear along with that delight: it was *like a pulse in the soul!*" The last scenes of this novel are matchless in their kind. Never was so much of the terrific alleviated by so much of the pitiful. The incidents are most tragic; yet over them is diffused a breath of sweetness, which softens away half their anguish, and reconciles us to that which remains. Our minds are prepared, long before, for the early nipping of that delicate blossom, for which this world was too bleak. Julia's last interview with Savillon mitigates her doom, partly by the joy her heart has tasted, and which nothing afterwards in life could equal, and partly by the certainty that she must either become guilty or continue wretched. Nothing can be at once sweeter and more affecting than her ecstatic dream after she has taken the fatal mixture, her seraphical playing on the organ, to which the waiting angels seem to listen, and her tranquil recalling the scenes of peaceful happiness with her friend, as she imagines her arms about her neck, and fancies that her Maria's tears are falling on her bosom. Then comes Montaubon's description of her as she drank the poison:—"She took it from me smiling, and her look seemed to lose its confusion. She drank my health! She was dressed in her white silk bed-gown, ornamented with pale, pink ribands. Her cheek was gently flushed from their reflection; her blue eyes were turned upwards as she drank, and a dark-brown ringlet lay on her shoulder." We do not think even the fate of "the gentle lady married to the Moor" calls forth tears so sweet as those which fall for the Julia of Mackenzie!

We rejoice to know and feel that these delicious tales cannot perish. Since they were written, indeed, the national imagination has been, in a great degree, perverted by strong excitements, and "fed on poisons till they have become a kind of nutriment." But the quiet and unpresuming beauties of these works depend not on the fashion of the world. They cannot be out of date till the dreams of young imagination shall vanish, and the deepest sympathies of love and hope shall be chilled for ever. While other works are extolled, admired, and reviewed, these will be loved and wept over. Their author, in the evening of his days, may truly feel that he has not lived in vain. Gentle hearts shall ever blend their thought of him among their remembrances of the benefactors of their youth. And when the fever of the world "shall hang upon the beatings of their hearts," how often will their spirits turn to him, who, as he cast a soft seriousness over the morning of life, shall assist in tranquillizing its noon tide sorrows!

"THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY."

Here are we in a bright and breathing world.—*Wordsworth.*

[New Monthly Magazine.]

We esteem the productions which the great novelist of Scotland has poured forth with startling speed from his rich treasury, not only as multiplying the sources of delight to thousands, but as shedding the most genial influences on the taste and feeling of the people. These, with their fresh spirit of health, have counteracted the workings of that blasting spell by which the genius of Lord Byron once threatened strangely to fascinate and debase the vast multitude of English readers. Men, seduced by their noble poet, had begun to pay homage to mere energy, to regard virtue as low and mean compared with lofty crime, and to think that high passion carried in itself a justification for its most fearful excesses. He inspired them with a feeling of diseased curiosity to know the secrets of dark bosoms, while he opened his own perturbed spirit to their gaze. His works, and those imported from Germany, tended to give to our imagination an introspective cast, to perplex it with metaphysical subtleties, and to render our poetry "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." The genius of our country was thus in danger of being perverted from its purest uses to become the minister of vain philosophy, and the anatomist of polluted natures.

"The author of Waverley" (as he delights to be styled) has weaned it from its idols, and restored to it its warm, youthful blood, and human affections. Nothing can be more opposed to the gloom, the inward revolvings, and morbid speculations, which the world once seemed inclined to esteem as the sole prerogatives of the bard, than his exquisite creations. His persons are no shadowy abstractions—no personifications of a dogma—no portraits of the author varied in costume, but similar in features. With all their rich varieties of character, whether their heroical spirit touches on the godlike, or their wild eccentricities border on the farcical, they are men fashioned of human earth, and warm with human sympathies. He does not seek for the sublime in the mere intensity of burning passion, or for sources of enjoyment in those feverish gratifications which some would teach us to believe the only felicities worthy of high and impassioned souls. He writes everywhere with a keen and healthful relish for all the good things of life—constantly refreshes us where we least expected it, with a sense of that pleasure which is spread through the earth "to be caught in stray gifts by whoever will find," and brightens all things with the spirit of gladness. There is little of a meditative or retrospective cast in his works. Whatever age he chooses for his story, lives before us: we become contemporaries of all his persons, and sharers in all their fortunes. Of all men who have ever written, excepting Shakspeare, he has perhaps the least of exclusiveness, the least of those feelings which keep men apart from their kind. He has his own predilections—and we love him the better for them, even when they are not ours—but they never prevent him from grasping with cordial spirit all that is human. His tolerance is the most complete, for it extends to adverse bigotries; his love of enjoyment does not exclude the ascetic from his respect, nor does his fondness for hereditary rights and time-honoured institutions prevent his admiration of the fiery zeal of a sectary. His genius shines with an equal light on all—illuminating the vast hills of purple heath, the calm breast of the quiet water, and the rich masses of the grove—now gleaming with a sacred light on the distant towers of some old monastery, now softening the green-wood shade, now piercing the gloom of the rude cave where the old Covenanter lies—free and universal, and bounteous as the sun—and pouring its radiance with a like impartiality "upon a living and rejoicing world."

We shall not attempt, in this slight sketch, to follow our author regularly through all his rich and varied creations; but shall rather consider his powers in general of natural description—of skill in the delineation of character—and of exciting high and poetical interest, by the gleams of his fancy, the tragic elevation of his scenes, and the fearful touches which he delights to borrow from the world of spirits.

In the vivid description of natural scenery our author is wholly without a rival, unless Sir Walter Scott will dispute the pre-eminence with him; and, even then, we think the novelist would be found to surpass the bard. The free grace of nature has, of late, contributed little to the charm of our highest poetry. Lord Byron has always, in his reference to the majestic scenery of the universe, dealt rather in grand generalities than minute pictures, has used the turbulence of the elements as symbols of inward tempests, and sought the vast solitudes and deep tranquillity of nature, but to assuage the fevers of the soul. Wordsworth—who, amidst the contempt of the ignorant and of the worldly wise, has been gradually and silently moulding all the leading spirits of the age—has sought communion with nature, for other purposes than to describe her external forms. He has shed on all creation a sweet and consecrating radiance, far other than "the light of common day." In his poetry the hills and streams appear, not as they are seen by vulgar eyes, but as the poet himself, in the holiness of his imagination, has arrayed them. They are peopled not with the shapes of old superstition, but with the shadows of the poet's thought, the dreams of a glory that shall be. They are resonant—not with the voice of birds, or the soft whisperings of the breeze, but with echoes from beyond the tomb. Their lowliest objects—a dwarf bush, an old stone, a daisy, or a small celandine—affect us with thoughts as deep, and inspire meditations as profound, as the loveliest scene of reposing beauty, or the wildest region of the mountains—because the heart of the poet is all in all—and the visible objects of his love are not dear to us for their own colours or forms, but for the sentiment which he has linked to them, and which they bring back upon our souls. We would not have this otherwise for all the romances in the world. But it gladdens us to see the intrinsic claims of nature on our hearts asserted, and to feel that she is, for her own sake, worthy of deep love. It is not as the richest index of divine philosophy alone that she has a right to our affections; and, therefore, we rejoice that in our author she has found a votary to whom her works are in themselves "an appetite, a feeling, and a love," and who finds, in their contemplation, "no need of a remoter charm, by thought supplied, or any interest unborrowed from the eye." Every gentle swelling of the ground—every gleam of the water—every curve and rock of the shore—all varieties of the earth, from the vastest crag to the soft grass of the woodland walk, and all changes of the heaven from "morn to noon, from noon to latest eve,"—are placed before us, in his works, with a distinctness beyond that which the painter's art can attain, while we seem to breathe the mountain air, or drink in the freshness of the valleys. We perceive the change in the landscape at every step of the delightful journey through which he guides us. Our recollection never confounds any one scene with another, although so many are laid in the same region, and are alike in general character. The lake among the hills, on which the cave of Donald Bean bordered—that near which the clan of the M'Gregors combated, and which closed in blue calmness over the body of Maurice—and that which encircled the castle of Julian Avenel—are distinct from each other in the imagination, as the loveliest scenes which we have corporally visited. What in softest beauty can exceed the description of the ruins of St. Ruth; in the lovelily romantic, the approach to the pass of Aberfoil; in varied lustre, the winding shores of Ellangowan bay; in rude and dreary majesty, the Highland scenes, where Ronald of the Mist lay hidden; and in terrific sublimity, the rising of the sea on Fairport Sands, and the perils of Sir Arthur Wardour and his daughter? Our author's scenes of comparative barrenness are enchanting by the vividness of his details, and the fond delight with which he dwells on their redeeming features. We seem to know every little plot of green, every thicket of copse-wood, and every turn and cascade of the stream in the vale of Glendearg, and to remember each low bush in the barren scene of her skirmish between the Covenanters and Claverhouse, as though we had been familiar with it in childhood. The descriptions of this author are manifestly rendered more vivid by the intense love which he bears to his country—not only to her luxuriant and sublime scenery, but "her bare earth, and mountains bare, and grass in the green field." He will scarcely leave a brook, a mountain ash, or a lichen on the rocks of her shore, without due honour. He may fitly be regarded as the genius of Scotland, who has given her a poetical interest, a vast place in the imagination, which may almost compensate for the loss of that political independence, the last struggling love for which he so nobly celebrates.

"The author of Waverley" is, however, chiefly distinguished by the number, the spirit, and the individuality of his characters. We know not, indeed, where to begin or to end with the vast crowd of their genial and noble shapes which come thronging on our memory. His ludicrous characters are dear to us, because they are seldom merely quaint or strange, the dry oddities of fancy, but have as genuine a kindred with humanity as the most gifted and enthusiastic of their fellows. The laughter which they excite is full of social sympathy, and we love them and our nature the better while we indulge it. Whose heart does not claim kindred with Baillie Nichol Jarvie, while the Glasgow weaver, without losing one of his nice peculiarities, kindles into honest warmth with his ledger in hand, and in spite of broad-cloth grows almost romantic? In whom does a perception of the ludicrous for a moment injure the veneration which the brave, stout-hearted and chivalrous Baron of Bradwardine inspires? Who shares not in the fond enthusiasm of Oldbuck for black letter, in his eager and tremulous joy at grasping rare books at low prices, and in his discoveries of Roman camps and monuments which we can hardly forgive Edie Ochiltree for disproving? Compared with these genial persons, the portraits of mere singularity—however inimitably finished—are harsh and cold; of these, indeed, the works of our author afford scarcely more than one signal example—Captain Dalgetty—who is a mere piece of ingenious mechanism, like the automaton chess-player, and with all his cleverness, gives us little pleasure, for he excites as little sympathy. Almost all the persons of these novels, diversified as they are, are really endowed with some deep and elevating enthusiasm, which, whether breaking through eccentricities of manner, perverted by error, or mingled with crime, ever asserts the majesty of our nature, its deep affections, and undying powers. This is true, not only of the divine enthusiasm of Flora Mac Ivor—of the sweet heroism of Jeannie Deans—of the angelic tenderness and fortitude of Rebecca, but of the puritanic severities and awful zeal of Balfour of Burley, and the yet more frightful energy of Macbriar, equally ready to sacrifice a blameless youth, and to bear without shrinking the keenest of mortal agonies. In the fierce and hunted child of the mist—in the daring and reckless libertine Staunton—in the fearful Elspeth—in the vengeful wife of M'Gregor—are traits of wild and irregular greatness, fragments of might and grandeur, which show how noble and sacred a thing the heart of man is, in spite of its strangest debasements and perversions. How does the inimitable portrait of Claverhouse at first excite our hatred for that carelessness of human misery, that contempt for the life of his fellows, that cold hauteur and finished indifference which are so vividly depicted;—and yet how does his mere soldierly enthusiasm redeem him at last, and almost persuade us that the honour and fame of such a man were cheaply purchased by a thousand lives! We can scarcely class Rob Roy among these mingled characters. He has nothing but the name and the fortune of an outlaw and a robber. He is, in truth, one of the noblest of heroes—a Prince of the hether and the rock—whose very thirst for vengeance is tempered and harmonized by his fondness for the wild and lovely scenes of his home. Indeed the influences of majestic scenery are to be perceived tinging the rudest minds which the author has made to expatiate amidst its solitudes. The passions even of Burley and of Macbriar borrow a grace from the steep crags, the deep masses of shade, and the silent caves, among which they were nurtured, as the most rapid and perturbed stream which rushes through a wild and romantic region bears some reflection of noble imagery on its impetuous surface. To some of his less stern but unlettered personages, nature seems to have been a kindly instructor, nurturing high thoughts within them, and well supplying to them all the lack of written wisdom. The wild sublimity of Meg Merrilies is derived from her long converse with the glories of creation; the floating clouds have lent to her something of their grace; she has contemplated the rocks till her soul is firm as they, and gazed intently on the face of nature until she has become half acquainted with its mysteries. The old king's beadman has not journeyed for years in vain among the hills and woods; their beauty has sunk into his soul; and his days seem bound each to each by "natural piety," which he has learned among them.

That we think there is much of true poetical genius—much of that which softens, refines, and elevates humanity in the works of this author—may be inferred from our remarks on his power of imbodying human character. The gleams of a soft and delicate fancy are tenderly cast over many of their scenes—heightening that which is already lovely, relieving the gloomy, and making even the thin blades of barren regions shine refreshingly on the eyes. We occasionally meet with a pure and pensive beauty, as in Pattieson's description of his sensations in his evening walks after the feverish drudgery of his school—with wild yet graceful fantasies, as in the songs of Davie Gellatly—or with visionary and aërial shapes, like the spirit of the House of Avenel. But the poetry of this author is, for the most part, of a far deeper cast;—flowing from his intense consciousness of the mysteries of our nature, and constantly impressing on our minds the high sanctities and the mortal destiny of our being. No one has ever made so impressive a use of the solemnities of life and death—of the awfulness which rests over the dying, and renders all their words and actions sacred—or of the fond retrospection, and the intense present enjoyment, snatched fearfully as if to secure it from fate, which are the peculiar blessings of a short and uncertain existence. Was ever the robustness of life—the mantling of the strong current of joyous blood—the high animation of health, spirits, and a stout heart, more vividly brought before the mind than in the description of Frank Kennedy's demeanour as he rides lustily forth, never to return?—or the fearful change from this hearty enjoyment of life to the chillness of mortality, more deeply impressed on the imagination than in all the minute examinations of the scene of his murder, the traces of the deadly contest, the last marks of the struggling footsteps, and the description of the corpse at the foot of the crag? Can a scene of mortality be conceived more fearful than that where Bertram, in the glen of Dernclugh, witnesses the last agonies of one over whom Meg Merrilies is chanting her wild ditties to soothe the passage of the spirit? What a stupendous scene is that of the young fisher's funeral—the wretched father writhing in the contortions of agony—the mother silent in tender sorrow—the motley crowd assembled to partake of strange festivity—and the old grandmother fearfully linking the living to the dead, now turning her wheel in apathy and unconsciousness, now drinking with frightful mirth to many "such merry meetings," now, to the astonishment of the beholders, rising to comfort her son, and intimating with horrid solemnity that there was more reason to mourn for her than for the departed! Equal in terrific power, is the view given us of the last confession and death of that "awful woman"—her intense perception of her long past guilt, with her deadness to all else—her yet quenchless hate to the object of her youthful vengeance, animating her frame with unearthly fire—her dying fancies that she is about to follow her mistress, and the broken images of old grandeur which flit before her as she perishes. These things are conceived in the highest spirit of tragedy, which makes life and death meet together, which exhibits humanity stripped of its accidents in all its depth and height, which impresses us at once with the victory of death, and of the eternity of those energies which it appears to subdue. There are also in these works, situations of human interest as strong as ever were invented—attended too with all that high apparel of the imagination, which renders the images of fear and anguish majestical. Such is that scene in the lone house after the defeat of the Covenanters, where Morton finds himself in the midst of a band of zealots, who regard him as given by God into their hands as a victim—where he is placed before the clock to gaze on the advances of the hand to the hour when he is to be slain, amidst the horrible devotion of his foes. The whole scene is, we think, without an equal in the conceptions which dramatic power has been able to imbody. Its startling unexpectedness, yet its perfect probability to the imagination—the high tone and wild enthusiasm of character in the murderers—the sacrificial cast of their intended deed in their own raised and perverted thoughts—the fearful view given to the bodily senses of their prisoner of his remaining moments by the segment of the circle yet to be traversed by the finger of the clock before him, enable us to participate in the workings of his own dizzy soul, as he stands "awaiting till the sword destined to slay him crept out of its scabbard gradually, and, as it were by straw-breadths," and condemned to drink the bitterness of death "drop by drop," while his destined executioners seem "to alter their forms and features like the spectres in a feverish dream; their features become larger and their faces more disturbed;" until the beings around him appear actually demons, the walls seem to drop with blood, and "the light tick of the clock thrills on his ear with such loud, painful distinctness, as if each sound were the prick of a bodkin inflicted on the naked nerve of the organ." The effect is even retrospectively heightened by the heroic deaths of the Covenanters immediately succeeding, which give a dignity and a consecration to their late terrific design. The trial and execution of Fergus Mac Ivor are also, in the most exalted sense of the term, tragical. They are not only of breathless interest from the external circumstances, nor of moral grandeur from the heroism of Fergus and his follower, but of poetic dignity from that power of imagination which renders for a time the rules of law sublime as well as fearful, and gives to all the formalities of a trial more than a judicial majesty. It is seldom, indeed, that the terrors of our author offend or shock us, because they are accompanied by that reconciling power which softens without breaking the current of our sympathies. But there are some few instances of unrelieved horror—or of anguish, which overmasters fantasy—as the strangling of Glossin by Dirk Haiteraich, the administering of the torture to Macbriar, and the bloody bridal of Lammermuir. If we compare these with the terrors of Burley in his cave—where with his naked sword in one hand and his Bible in the other, he wrestles with his own remorse, believing it, in the spirit of his faith, a fiend of Satan—and with the sinking of Ravenswood in the sands; we shall feel how the grandeur of religious thought in the first instance, and the stately scenery of nature and the air of the supernatural in the last, ennoble agony, and render horrors grateful to the soul.

We must not pass over, without due acknowledgment, the power of our author in the description of battles, as exhibited in his pictures of the engagement at Preston Pans, of the first skirmish with the Covenanters, in which they overcome Claverhouse, and of the battle in which they were, in turn, defeated. The art by which he contrives at once to give the mortal contest in all its breadth and vastness—to present it to us in the noblest masses, yet to make us spectators of each individual circumstance of interest in the field, may excite the envy of a painter. We know of nothing resembling those delineations in history or romance, except the descriptions given by Thucydides of the blockade of Platæa, of the Corcyræan massacres, of the attempt to retake Epipolæ in the night, of the great naval action before Syracuse, of all the romantic events of the Sicilian war, and the varied miseries of the Athenian army in their retreat under Nicias. In the life and spirit, and minuteness of the details—in the intermingling of allusions to the scenery of the contests—and in the general fervour breathed over the whole, there is a remarkable resemblance between these passages of the Greek historian, and the narratives of Scottish contests by the author of Waverley. There is, too, the same patriotic zeal in both; though the feeling in the former is of a more awful and melancholy cast, and that of the latter more light and cheerful. The Scottish novelist may, like the noblest historians, boast that he has given to his country "Κτημα ες αει"—a possession for ever!

It remains that we should say a word on the use made of the supernatural in these romances. There is, in the mode of its employment, more of gusto—more that approaches to an actual belief in its wonders, than in the works of any other author of these incredulous times. Even Shakspeare himself, in his remote age, does not appear to have drank in so deeply the spirit of superstition as our novelist of the nineteenth century. He treats, indeed, all the fantasies of his countrymen with that spirit of allowance and fond regard with which he always touches on human emotions. But he does not seem to have heartily partaken in them as awful realities. His witches have power to excite wonder, but little to chill men's bloods. Ariel, the visions of Prospero's enchanted isle, the "quaint fairies and the dapper elves" of the Midsummer Night's Dream glitter on the fancy, in a thousand shapes of dainty loveliness, but never affect us otherwise than as creations of the poet's brain. Even the ghost in Hamlet does not appal us half so fearfully as many a homely tale which has nothing to recommend it but the earnest belief of its tremulous reciter. There is little magic in the web of life, notwithstanding all the variety of its shades, as Shakspeare has drawn it. Not so is it with our author; his spells have manifest hold on himself, and, therefore, they are very potent with the spirits of his readers. No prophetic intimation in his works is ever suffered to fail. The spirit which appears to Fergus—the astronomical predictions of Guy Mannering—the eloquent curses, and more eloquent blessings, of Meg Merrilies—the dying denunciation of Mucklewrath—the old prophecy in the Bride of Lammermuir—all are fulfilled to the very letter. The high and joyous spirits of Kennedy are observed by one of the bystanders as intimations of his speedy fate. We are far from disapproving of these touches of the super-human, for they are made to blend harmoniously with the freshest hues of life, and without destroying its native colouring, give to it a more solemn tinge. But we cannot extend our indulgence to the seer in the Legend of Montrose, or the Lady of Avenel, in the Monastery; where the spirits of another world do not cast their shadowings on this, but stalk forth in open light, and "in form as palpable" as any of the mortal characters. In works of passion, fairies and ghosts can scarcely be "simple products of the common day," without destroying all harmony in our perceptions, and bringing the whole into discredit with the imagination as well as the feelings. Fairy tales are among the most exquisite things in the world, and so are delineations of humanity like those of our author; but they can never be blended without debasing the former into chill substances, or refining the latter into airy nothings.

We shall avoid the fruitless task of dwelling on the defects of this author, or the general insipidity of his lovers, on the want of skill in the development of his plots, on the clumsiness of his prefatory introductions, or the impotence of many of his conclusions. He has done his country and his nature no ordinary service. He has brought romance almost into our own times, and made the nobleness of humanity familiar to our daily thoughts. He has enriched history to us by opening such varied and delicious vistas to our gaze, beneath the range of its loftier events and more public characters. May his intellectual treasury prove exhaustless as the purse of Fortunatus, and may he dip into it unsparingly for the delight and the benefit of his species!

GODWIN.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

Mr. Godwin is the most original—not only of living novelists—but of living writers in prose. There are, indeed very few authors of any age who are so clearly entitled to the praise of having produced works, the first perusal of which is a signal event in man's internal history. His genius is by far the most extraordinary, which the great shaking of nations and of principles—the French revolution—impelled and directed in its progress. English literature, at the period of that marvellous change, had become sterile; the rich luxuriance which once overspread its surface, had gradually declined into thin and scattered productions of feeble growth and transient duration. The fearful convulsion which agitated the world of politics and of morals, tore up this shallow and exhausted surface—disclosed vast treasures which had been concealed for centuries—burst open the secret springs of imagination and of thought—and left, instead of the smooth and weary plain, a region of deep valleys and of shapeless hills, of new cataracts and of awful abysses, of spots blasted into everlasting barrenness, and regions of deepest and richest soil. Our author partook in the first enthusiasms of the spirit-stirring season—in "its pleasant exercise of hope and joy"—in much of its speculative extravagance, but in none of its practical excesses. He was roused not into action but into thought; and the high and undying energies of his soul, unwasted on vain efforts for the actual regeneration of man, gathered strength in those pure fields of meditation to which they were limited. The power which might have ruled the disturbed nations with the wildest, directed only to the creation of high theories and of marvellous tales, imparted to its works a stern reality, and a moveless grandeur which never could spring from mere fantasy. His works are not like those which a man, who is endued with a deep sense of beauty, or a rare faculty of observation, or a sportive wit, or a breathing eloquence, may fabricate as the "idle business" of his life, as the means of profit or of fame. They have more in them of acts than of writings. They are the living and the immortal *deeds* of a man who must have been a great political adventurer had he not been an author. There is in "Caleb Williams" alone the material—the real burning energy—which might have animated a hundred schemes for the weal or wo of the species.

No writer of fictions has ever succeeded so strikingly as Mr. Godwin, with so little adventitious aid. His works are neither gay creatures of the element, nor pictures of external life—they derive not their charm from the delusions of fancy, or the familiarities of daily habitude—and are as destitute of the fascinations of light satire and felicitous delineation of society, as they are of the magic of the Arabian Tales. His style has "no figures and no fantasies," but is simple and austere. Yet his novels have a power which so enthralls us, that we half doubt, when we read them in youth, whether all our experience is not a dream, and these the only realities. He lays bare to us the innate might and majesty of man. He takes the simplest and most ordinary emotions of our nature, and makes us feel the springs of delight or of agony which they contain, the stupendous force which lies hid within them, and the sublime mysteries with which they are connected. He exhibits the naked wrestle of the passions in a vast solitude, where no object of material beauty disturbs our attention from the august spectacle, and where the least beating of the heart is audible in the depth of the stillness. His works endow the abstractions of life with more of real presence, and make us more intensely conscious of existence than any others with which we are acquainted. They give us a new feeling of the capacity of our nature for action or for suffering, make the currents of our blood mantle within us, and our bosoms heave with indistinct desires for the keenest excitements and the strangest perils. We feel as though we could live years in moments of energetic life, while we sympathize with his breathing characters. In things which before appeared indifferent, we discern sources of the fullest delight or of the most intense anguish. The healthful breathings of the common air seem instinct with an unspeakable rapture. The most ordinary habits which link one season of life to another become the awakeners of thoughts and of remembrances "which do often lie too deep for tears." The nicest disturbances of the imagination make the inmost fibres of the being quiver with agonies. Passions which have not usually been thought worthy to agitate the soul, now first seem to have their own ardent beatings, and their tumultuous joys. We seem capable of a more vivid life than we have ever before felt or dreamed of, and scarcely wonder that he who could thus give us a new sense of our own vitality, should have imagined that mind might become omnipotent over matter, and that he was able, by an effort of the will, to become corporeally immortal!

The intensity of passion which is manifested in the novels of Godwin is of a very different kind from that which burns in the poems of a noble bard, whom he has been sometimes erroneously supposed to resemble. The former sets before us mightiest realities in clear vision; the latter imbodies the phantoms of a feverish dream. The strength of Godwin is the pure energy of unsophisticated nature; that of Lord Byron is the fury of disease. The grandeur of the last is derived from its transitoriness; that of the first from its eternal essence. The emotion in the poet receives no inconsiderable part of its force from its rebound from the dark rocks and giant barriers which seem to confine its rage within narrow boundaries; the feeling of the novelist is in its own natural current deep and resistless. The persons of the bard feel intensely, because they soon shall feel no more; those of the novelist glow, and kindle, and agonize, because they shall never perish. In the works of both, guilt is often associated with sublime energy; but how dissimilar are the impressions which they leave on the spirit! Lord Byron strangely blends the moral degradation with the intellectual majesty: so that goodness appears tame, and crime only is honoured and exalted. Godwin, on the other hand, only teaches us bitterly to mourn the evil which has been cast on a noble nature, and to regard the energy of the character not as inseparably linked with vice, but as destined ultimately to subdue it. He makes us everywhere feel that crime is not the native heritage, but the accident, of the species, of which we are members. He impresses us with the immortality of virtue; and while he leaves us painfully to regret the stains which the most gifted and energetic characters contract amidst the pollutions of time, he inspires us with hope that these shall pass away for ever. We drink in unshaken confidence the good and the true, which is ever of more value than hatred or contempt for the evil!

"Caleb Williams," the earliest, is also the most popular of our author's romances, not because his latter works have been less rich in sentiment and passion, but because they are, for the most part, confined to the development of single characters; while in this there is the opposition and death grapple of two beings, each endowed with poignant sensibilities and quenchless energy. There is no work of fiction which more rivets the attention—no tragedy which exhibits a struggle more sublime, or sufferings more intense, than this; yet to produce the effect, no complicated machinery is employed, but the springs of action are few and simple. The motives are at once common and elevated, and are purely intellectual, without appearing for an instant inadequate to their mighty issues. Curiosity, for instance, which generally seems a low and ignoble motive for scrutinizing the secrets of a man's life, here seizes with strange fascination on a gentle and ingenuous spirit, and supplies it with excitement as fervid, and snatches of delight as precious and as fearful, as those feelings create which we are accustomed to regard as alone worthy to enrapture or to agitate. The involuntary recurrence by Williams to the string of phrensy in the soul of one whom he would die to serve—the workings of his tortures on the heart of Falkland till they wring confidence from him—and the net thenceforth spread over the path of the youth like an invisible spell by his agonized master, surprising as they are, arise from causes so natural and so adequate, that the imagination at once owns them as authentic. The mild beauty of Falkland's natural character, contrasted with the guilt he has incurred, and his severe purpose to lead a long life of agony and crime, that his fame may be preserved spotless, is affecting almost without example. There is a rude grandeur even in the gigantic oppressor Tyrel, which all his disgusting enormities cannot destroy. Independently of the master-spring of interest, there are in this novel individual passages which can never be forgotten. Such are the fearful flight of Emily with her ravisher—the escape of Caleb Williams from prison, and his enthusiastic sensations on the recovery of his freedom, though wounded and almost dying without help—and the scenes of his peril among the robbers. Perhaps this work is the grandest ever constructed out of the simple elements of humanity, without any extrinsic aid from imagination, wit, or memory.

In "St. Leon," Mr. Godwin has sought the stores of the supernatural;—but the "metaphysical aid" which he has condescended to accept is not adapted to carry him farther from nature, but to ensure a more intimate and wide communion with its mysteries. His hero does not acquire the philosopher's stone and the elixir of immortality to furnish out for himself a dainty solitude, where he may dwell, soothed with the music of his own undying thoughts, and rejoicing in his severance from his frail and transitory fellows. Apart from those among whom he moves, his yearnings for sympathy become more intense as it eludes him, and his perceptions of the mortal lot of his species become more vivid and more fond, as he looks on it from an intellectual eminence which is alike unassailable to death and to joy. Even in this work, where the author has to conduct a perpetual miracle, his exceeding earnestness makes it difficult to believe him a fabulist. Listen to his hero, as he expatiates in the first consciousness of his high prerogatives:

"I surveyed my limbs, all the joints and articulations of my frame, with curiosity and astonishment. What! exclaimed I, these limbs, this complicated but brittle frame shall last for ever! No disease shall attack it; no pain shall seize it; death shall withhold from it for ever his abhorred grasp! Perpetual vigour, perpetual activity, perpetual youth, shall take up their abode with me! Time shall generate in me no decay, shall not add a wrinkle to my brow, or convert a hair of my head to gray! This body was formed to die; this edifice to crumble into dust; the principles of corruption and mortality are mixed up in every atom of my frame. But for me the laws of nature are suspended, the eternal wheels of the universe roll backward; I am destined to be triumphant over Fate and Time! Months, years, cycles, centuries! To me these are but as indivisible moments. I shall never become old; I shall always be, as it were, in the porch and infancy of existence; no lapse of years shall subtract any thing from my future duration. I was born under Louis the Twelfth; the life of Francis the First now threatens a speedy termination; he will be gathered to his fathers, and Henry, his son, will succeed him. But what are princes, and kings, and generations of men to me! I shall become familiar with the rise and fall of empires; in a little while the very name of France, my country, will perish from off the face of the earth, and men will dispute about the situation of Paris, as they dispute about the site of ancient Nineveh, and Babylon, and Troy. Yet I shall still be young. I shall take my most distant posterity by the hand; I shall accompany them in their career; and, when they are worn out and exhausted, shall shut up the tomb over them, and set forward."

This is a strange tale, but it tells like a true one! When we first read it, it seemed as though it had itself the power of alchemy to steal into our veins, and render us capable of resisting death and age. For a short—too short! a space, all time seemed open to our personal view—we felt no longer as of yesterday; but the grandest parts of our knowledge of the past seemed mightiest recollections of a far-off childhood.

"The wars we too remembered of King Nine,
And old Assaracus, and Ibycus divine."

This was the happy extravagance of an hour; but it is ever the peculiar power of Mr Godwin to make us feel that there is something within us which cannot perish!

"Fleetwood" has less of our author's characteristic energy than any other of his works. The earlier parts of it, indeed, where the formation of the hero's character, in free rovings amidst the wildest of nature's scenery, is traced, have a deep beauty which reminds us of some of the holiest imaginations of Wordsworth. But when the author would follow him into the world—through the frolics of college, the dissipations of Paris, and the petty disquietudes of matrimonial life—we feel that he has condescended too far. He is no graceful trifler; he cannot work in these frail and low materials. There is, however, one scene in this novel most wild and fearful. This is where Fleetwood, who has long brooded in anguish over the idea of his wife's falsehood, keeps strange festival on his wedding-day—when, having procured a waxen image of her whom he believes perfidious, and dressed a frightful figure in a uniform to represent her imagined paramour, he locks himself in an apartment with these horrid counterfeits, a supper of cold meats, and a barrel-organ, on which he plays the tunes often heard from the pair he believes guilty, till his silent agony gives place to delirium, he gazes around with glassy eyes, sees strange sights and dallies with frightful mockeries, and at last tears the dreadful spectacle to atoms, and is seized with furious madness. We do not remember, even in the works of our old dramatists, any thing of its kind comparable to this voluptuous fantasy of despair.

"Mandeville" has all the power of its author's earliest writings; but its main subject—the development of an engrossing and maddening hatred—is not one which can excite human sympathy. There is, however, a bright relief to the gloom of the picture, in the angelic disposition of Clifford, and the sparkling loveliness of Henrietta, who appears "full of life, and splendour, and joy." All Mr. Godwin's female heroines have a certain airiness and radiance—a visionary grace, peculiar to them, which may at first surprise by their contrast to the robustness of his masculine creations. But it will perhaps be found that the more deeply man is conversant with the energies of his own heart, the more will he seek for opposite qualities in woman.

Of all Mr. Godwin's writings the choicest in point of style is a little essay "on Sepulchres." Here his philosophic thought, subdued and sweetened by the contemplation of mortality, is breathed forth in the gentlest tone. His "Political Justice," with all the extravagance of its first edition, or with all the inconsistencies of its last, is a noble work, replete with lofty principle and thought, and often leading to the most striking results by a process of the severest reasoning. Man, indeed, cannot and ought not to act universally on its leading doctrine—that we should in all things seek only the greatest amount of good without favour or affection; but it is at least better than the low selfishness of the world. It breathes also a mild and cheerful faith in the progressive advances and the final perfection of the species. It was this good hope for humanity which excited Mr. Malthus to affirm, that there is in the constitution of man's nature a perpetual barrier to any extensive improvement in his earthly condition. After a long interval, Mr. Godwin has announced a reply to this popular system—a system which reduces man to an animal, governed by blind instinct, and destitute of reason, sentiment, imagination, and hope, whose most mysterious instincts are matter of calculation to be estimated by rules of geometrical series!—Most earnestly do we desire to witness his success. To our minds, indeed, he sufficiently proves the falsehood of his adversary's doctrines by his own intellectual character. His works are, in themselves, evidences that there is power and energy in man which have never yet been fully brought into action, and which were not given to the species in vain. He has lived himself in the soft and mild light of those peaceful years, which he believes shall hereafter bless the world, when force and selfishness shall disappear, and love and joy shall be the unerring lights of the species.

MATURIN.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

The author of Montorio and of Bertram is unquestionably a person gifted with no ordinary powers. He has a quick sensibility—a penetrating and intuitive acuteness—and an unrivalled vigour and felicity of language, which enable him at one time to attain the happiest condensation of thought, and at others to pour forth a stream of eloquence, rich, flowing, and deep, checkered with images of delicate loveliness, or darkened by broad shadows cast from objects of stern and adamantine majesty. Yet, in common with many other potent spirits of the present time, he fails to excite within us any pure and lasting sympathy. We do not, on reading his works, feel that we have entered on a precious and imperishable treasure. They dazzle, they delight, they surprise, and they weary us—we lay them down with a vague admiration for the author, and try to shake off their influence as we do the impressions of a feverish dream. It is not thus that we receive the productions of genuine and holy bards—of Shakspeare, of Milton, of Spenser, or of Wordsworth—whose far-reaching imaginations come home to our hearts, who become the companions of our sweetest moods, and with whom we long to "set up our everlasting rest." Their creations are often nearest to our hearts when they are farthest removed from the actual experience of our lives. We travel on the bright tracks which their genius reveals to us as safely and with as sure and fond a tread as along the broad highway of the world. When the regions which they set before us are the most distant from our ordinary perceptions, we yet seem at home in them, their wonders are strangely familiar to us, and the scene, overspread with a consecrating and lovely lustre, breaks on us, not as a wild fantastic novelty, but as a revived recollection of some holier life, which the soul rejoices thus delightfully to recognise.

Not thus do the works of Mr. Maturin—original and surprising as they often are—affect us. They have no fibres in them which entwine with the heart-strings, and which keep their hold until the golden chords of our sensibility and imagination themselves are broken. They pass by us sometimes like gorgeous phantoms, sometimes like "horrible shadows and unreal mockeries," which seem to elude us because they are not of us. When we follow him closest, he introduces us into a region where all is unsatisfactory and unreal—the chaos of principles, fancies, and passions—where mightiest elements are yet floating without order, where appearances between substance and shadow perpetually harass us, where visionary forms beckon us through painful avenues, and, on approach, sink into despicable realities; and pillars which looked ponderous and immovable at a distance, melt at the touch into air, and are found to be only masses of vapour and of cloud. He neither raises us to the skies, nor "brings his angels down," but astonishes by a phantasmagoria of strange appearances, sometimes scarcely distinguishable in member, joint, or limb, but which, when most clearly defined, come not near us, nor claim kindred by a warm and living touch. This chill remoteness from humanity is attended by a general want of harmony and proportion in the whole—by a wild excursiveness of sensibility and thought—which add to its ungenial influence, and may be traced to the same causes.

If we were disposed to refer these defects to one general source, we should attribute them to the want of an imagination proportionate to sensibility and to mastery of language in the writer's mind, or to his comparative neglect of that most divine of human faculties. It is edifying to observe how completely the nature of this power is mistaken by many who profess to decide on matters of taste. They regard it as something wild and irregular, the reverse of truth, nature, and reason, which is divided from insanity only by "a thin partition," and which, uncontrolled by sterner powers, forms the essence of madness. They think it abounds in speeches crowded with tawdry and superfluous epithets—in the discourses of Dr. Chalmers, because they deal so largely in infinite obscurities that there is no room for a single image—and in the poems of Lord Byron, because his characters are so unlike all beings which have ever existed. Far otherwise thought Spencer when he represented the laurel as the meed—not of poets insane—but "of poets SAGE." True imagination is, indeed, the deep eye of the profoundest wisdom. It is opposed to reason, not in its results, but in its process; it does not demonstrate truth only because it sees it. There are vast and eternal realities in our nature, which reason proves to exist—which sensibility "feels after and finds"—and which imagination beholds in clear and solemn vision, and pictures with a force and vividness which assures their existence even to ungifted mortals. Its subjects are the true, the universal, and the lasting. Its distinguishing property has no relation to dimness, or indistinctness, or dazzling radiance, or turbulent confusedness, but is the power of setting all things in the clearest light, and bringing them into perfect harmony. Like the telescope it does not only magnify celestial objects, but brings them nearer to us. Of all the faculties it is the severest and the most unerring. Reason may beguile with splendid sophistry; sensibility may fatally misguide; but if imagination exists at all, it must exhibit only the real. A mirror can no more reflect an object which is not before it, than the imagination can show the false and the baseless. By revealing to us its results in the language of imagery, it gives to them almost the evidence of the senses. If the analogy between an idea and its physical exponent is not complete, there is no effort of imagination—if it is, the truth is seen, and felt, and enjoyed, like the colours and forms of the material universe. And this effect is produced not only with the greatest possible certainty, but in the fewest possible words. Yet even when this is done—when the illustration is not only the most enchanting, but the most convincing of proofs—the writer is too often contemptuously depreciated as *flowery*, by the advocates of mere reason. Strange chance! that he who has imbodied truth in a living image, and thus rendered it visible to the intellectual perceptions, should be confounded with those who conceal all sense and meaning beneath mere *verbiage* and fragments of disjointed metaphor!

Thus the products of genuine imagination are "all compact." It is, indeed, only the compactness and harmony of its pictures which give to it its name or its value. To discover that there are mighty elements in humanity—to observe that there are bright hues and graceful forms in the external world—and to know the fitting names of these—is all which is required to furnish out a rich stock of spurious imagination to one who aspires to the claim of a wild and irregular genius. For him a dictionary is a sufficient guide to Parnassus. It is only by representing those intellectual elements in their finest harmony—by combining those hues and forms in the fairest pictures—or by making the glorious combinations of external things the symbols of truth and moral beauty—that imagination really puts forth its divine energies. We do not charge on Mr. Maturin that he is destitute of power to do this, or that he does not sometimes direct it to its purest uses. But his sensibility is so much more quick and subtle than his authority over his impressions is complete; the flow of his words so much more copious and facile than the throng of images on his mind; that he too often confounds us with unnumbered snatches and imperfect gleams of beauty, or astonishes us by an outpouring of eloquent bombast, instead of enriching our souls with distinct and vivid conceptions. Like many other writers of the present time—especially of his own country—he does not wait until the stream which young enthusiasm sets loose shall work itself clear, and calmly reflect the highest heavens. His creations bear any stamp but that of truth and soberness. He sees the glories of the external world, and the mightier wonders of man's moral and intellectual nature, with a quick sense, and feels them with an exquisite sympathy—but he gazes on them in "very drunkenness of heart," and becomes giddy with his own indistinct emotions, till all things seem confounded in a gay bacchanalian dance, and assume strange fantastic combinations; which, when transferred to his works, startle for a moment, but do not produce that "sober certainty of waking bliss" which real imagination assures. There are two qualities necessary to form a truly imaginative writer—a quicker and an intenser feeling than ordinary men possess for the beautiful and the sublime, and the calm and meditative power of regulating, combining, and arranging its own impressions, and of distinctly bodying forth the final results of this harmonizing process. Where the first of these properties exists, the last is, perhaps, attainable by that deep and careful study which is more necessary to a poet than to any artist who works in mere earthly materials. But this study many of the most gifted of modern writers unhappily disdain; and if mere sale and popularity are their objects, they are right; for, in the multitude, the wild, the disjointed, the incoherent, and the paradoxical, which are but for a moment, necessarily awaken more immediate sensation than the pure and harmonious, which are destined to last while nature and the soul shall endure.

It is easy to perceive how it is that the imperfect creations of men of sensibility and of eloquence strike and dazzle more at the first, than the completest works of truly imaginative poets. A perfect statue—a temple fashioned with exactest art—appear less, at a mere glance, from the nicety of their proportions. The vast majority of readers, in an age like ours, have neither leisure nor taste to seek and ponder over the effusions of holiest genius. They must be awakened into admiration by something new and strange and surprising; and the more remote from their daily thoughts and habits—the more fantastical and daring—the effort, the more will it please, because the more it will rouse them. Thus a man who will exhibit some impossible combination of heroism and meanness—of virtue and of vice

—of heavenly love and infernal malignity and baseness—will receive their wonder and their praise. They call this POWER, which is in reality the most pitiable weakness. It is because a writer has not imagination enough to exhibit in new forms the universal qualities of nature and the soul, that he takes some strange and horrible anomaly as his theme. Incompetent to the divine task of rendering beauty "a simple product of the common day," he tries to excite emotion by disclosing the foulest recess of the foulest heart. As he strikes only one feeling, and that coarsely and ungently, he appears to wield a mightier weapon than he whose harmonious beauty sheds its influence equably over the whole of the sympathies. That which touches with strange commotion, and mere violence on the heart, but leaves no image there, seems to vulgar spirits more potent than the faculty which applies to it all perfect figures, and leaves them to sink gently into its fleshly tablets to remain there for ever. Yet, surely, that which merely shakes is not equal even in power to that which impresses. The wild disjointed part may be more amazing to a diseased perception than the well-compacted whole; but it is the nice balancing of properties, the soft blending of shades, and the all-pervading and reconciling light shed over the harmonious imagination, which take off the sense of rude strength that alone is discernible in its naked elements. Is there more of heavenly power in seizing from among the tumult of chaos and eternal night, strange and fearful abortions, or in brooding over the vast abyss, and making it pregnant with life and glory and joy? Is it the higher exercise of human faculties to represent the frightful discordances of passion, or to show the grandeurs of humanity in that majestic repose which is at once an anticipation and a proof of its eternal destiny? Is transitory vice—the mere accident of the species—and those vices too which are the rarest and most appalling of all its accidents—or that good which is its essence and which never can perish, fittest for the uses of the bard? Shall he desire to haunt the caves which lie lowest on the banks of Acheron, or the soft bowers watered by "Siloa's brook that flows fast by the oracle of God?"

Mr. Maturin gave decisive indications of a morbid sensibility and a passionate eloquence out-running his imaginative faculties, in the commencement of his literary career. His first romance, the "Family of Montorio," is one of the wildest and strangest of all "false creations proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain." It is for the most part a tissue of magnificent yet unappalling horrors. Its great faults as a work of amusement, are the long and unrelieved series of its gloomy and marvellous scenes, and the unsatisfactory explanation of them all, as arising from mere human agency. This last error he borrowed from Mrs. Ratcliffe, to whom he is far inferior in the economy of terrors, but whom he greatly transcends in the dark majesty of his style. As his events are far more wild and wondrous than hers, so his development is necessarily far more incredible and vexatious. There is, in this story, a being whom we are long led to believe is not of this world—who speaks in the tones of the sepulchre, glides through the thickest walls, haunts two distant brothers in their most secret retirements through their strange wanderings, leads one of his victims to a scene which he believes infernal, and there terrifies him with sights of the wildest magic—and who after all this, and after really vindicating to the fancy his claim to the supernatural by the fearful cast of his language—is discovered to be a low impostor, who has produced all by the aid of poor tricks and secret passages! Where is the policy of this? Unless, by his power, the author had given a credibility to magic through four-fifths of his work, it never could have excited any feeling but that of impatience or of scorn. And when we have surrendered ourselves willingly to his guidance—when we have agreed to believe impossibilities at his bidding—why does he reward our credence with derision, and tacitly reproach us for not having detected his idle mockeries? After all, too, the reason is no more satisfied than the fancy; for it would be a thousand times easier to believe in the possibility of spiritual influences, than in a long chain of mean contrivances, no one of which could ever succeed. The first is but one wonder, and that one to which our nature has a strange leaning; the last are numberless, and have nothing to reconcile them to our thoughts. In submitting to the former, we contentedly lay aside our reasoning faculties; in approaching the latter our reason itself is appealed to at the moment when it is insulted. Great talent is, however, unquestionably exhibited in this singular story. A stern justice breathes solemnly through all the scenes in the devoted castle. "Fate sits on its dark battlements, and frowns." There is a spirit of deep philosophy in the tracing of the gradual influence of patricidal thoughts on the hearts of the brothers, which would finally exhibit the danger of dallying with evil fancies, if the subject were not removed so far from all ordinary temptations. Some of the scenes of horror, if they were not accumulated until they wear out their impression, would produce an effect inferior to none in the works of Ratcliffe or of Lewis. The scene in which Flippo escapes from the assassins, deserves to be ranked with the robber-scenes in the Monk and Count Fathom. The diction of the whole is rich and energetic—not, indeed, flowing in a calm beauty which may glide on for ever—but impetuous as a mountain torrent, which, though it speedily passes away, leaves behind it no common spoils—

> "Depositing upon the silent shore
> Of memory, images and gentle thoughts
> Which cannot die, and will not be destroyed."

"The Wild Irish Boy" is, on the whole, inferior to Montorio, though it served to give a farther glimpse into the vast extent of the author's resources. "The Milesian" is, perhaps, the most extraordinary of his romances. There is a bleak and misty grandeur about it, which, in spite of its glaring defects, sustains for it an abiding-place in the soul. Yet never, perhaps, was there a more unequal production—

alternately exhibiting the grossest plagiarism and the wildest originality—now swelling into offensive bombast, and anon disclosing the simplest majesty of nature, fluctuating with inconstant ebb between the sublime and the ridiculous, the delicate and the revolting. "Women, or Pour et Contre," is less unequal, but we think, on the whole, less interesting than the author's earlier productions. He should not venture, as in this work he has done, into the ordinary paths of existence. His persons, if not cast in a high and heroic mould, have no stamp of reality upon them. The reader of this work, though often dazzled and delighted, has a painful feeling that the characters are shadowy and unreal, like that which is experienced in dreams. They are unpleasant and tantalizing likenesses, approaching sufficiently near to the true to make us feel what they would be and lament what they are. Eva, Zaira, the manaic mother, and the group of Calvinists, have all a resemblance to nature—and sometimes to nature at its most passionate or its sweetest—but they look as at a distance from us, as though between us and them there were some veil, or discolouring medium, to baffle and perplex us. Still the novel is a splendid work; and gives the feeling that its author has "riches fineless" in store, which might delight as well as astonish the world, if he would cease to be their slave, and become their master.

In the narrow boundaries of the Drama the redundancies of Mr. Maturin have been necessarily corrected. In this walk, indeed, there seems reason to believe that his genius would have grown purer, as it assumed a severer attitude; and that he would have sought to attain high and true passion, and lofty imagination, had he not been seduced by the admiration unhappily lavished on Lord Byron's writings. The feverish strength, the singular blending of good and evil, and the spirit of moral paradox, displayed in these works, were congenial with his tastes, and aroused in him the desire to imitate. "Bertram," his first and most successful tragedy, is a fine piece of writing, wrought out of a nauseous tale, and rendered popular, not by its poetical beauties, but by the violence with which it jars on the sensibilities, and awakens the sluggish heart from its lethargy. "Manuel," its successor, feebler, though in the same style, excited little attention, and less sympathy. In "Fredolpho," the author, as though he had resolved to sting the public into a sense of his power, crowded together characters of such matchless depravity, sentiments of such a demoniac cast, and events of such gratuitous horror, that the moral taste of the audience, injured as it had been by the success of similar works, felt the insult, and rose up indignantly against it. Yet in this piece were passages of a soft and mournful beauty, breathing a tender air of romance, which led us bitterly to regret that the poet chose to "embower the spirit of a fiend, in mortal paradise of such sweet" song.

We do not, however despair even yet of the regeneration of our author's taste. There has always been something of humanity to redeem those works in which his genius has been most perverted. There is no deliberate sneering at the disinterested and the pure—no cold derision of human hopes—no deadness to the lonely and the loving, in his writings. His error is that of a hasty trusting to feverish impulses, not of a malignant design. There is far more of the soul of goodness in his evil things, than in those of the noble bard whose example has assisted to mislead him. He does not, indeed, know so well how to place his unnatural characters in imposing attitudes—to work up his morbid sensibilities for sale—or to "build the lofty rhyme" on shattered principles, and the melancholy fragments of hope. But his diction is more rich, his fancy is more fruitful, and his compass of thought and feeling more extensive. Happy shall we be to see him doing justice at last to his powers—studying not to excite the wonder of a few barren readers or spectators, but to live in the hearts of the good of future times—and, to this high end, leaving discord for harmony, the startling for the true, and the evil which, however potent, is but for a season, for the pure and the holy which endure for ever!

REVIEW OF RYMER'S WORKS ON TRAGEDY.

[Retrospective Review.]

These are very curious and edifying works. The author (who was the compiler of the *Fœdera*) appears to have been a man of considerable acuteness, maddened by a furious zeal for the honour of tragedy. He lays down the most fantastical rules for the composition which he chiefly reverses, and argues on them as "truths of holy writ." He criticises Shakspeare as one invested with authority to sit in judgment on his powers, and passes on him as decisive a sentence of condemnation, as ever was awarded against a friendless poet by a Reviewer. We will select a few passages from his work, which may be consolatory to modern authors and useful to modern critics.

The chief weight of Mr. Rymer's critical vengeance is wreaked on *Othello*. After a slight sketch of the plot, he proceeds at once to speak of the *moral*, which he seems to regard as of the first importance in tragedy.

"Whatever rubs or difficulty may stick on the bark, the moral use of this fable is very instructive. First, this may be a caution to all maidens of quality, how, without their parents' consent, they run away with blackamoors. Secondly, this may be a warning to all good wives, that they look well to their linen. Thirdly, this may be a lesson to husbands, that before their jealousy be tragical, the proofs may be mathematical."

Our author then proceeds happily to satirize Othello's colour. He observes, that "Shakspeare was accountable both to the eyes and to the ears." On this point we think his objection is not without reason. We agree with an excellent modern critic in the opinion, that though a reader may sink Othello's colour in his mind, a spectator can scarcely avoid losing the mind in the colour. But Mr. Rymer proceeds thus to characterize Othello's noble account to the Senate of his whole course of love.

"This was the charm, this was the philtre, the love-powder that took the daughter of this noble Venetian. This was sufficient to make the Blackamoor white, and reconcile all, though there had been a cloven foot into the bargain. A meaner woman might as soon be taken by Aqua Tetrachymagogon."

The idea of Othello's elevation to the rank of a general, stings Mr. Rymer almost to madness. He regards the poet's offence as a kind of misprision of treason.

"The character of the state (of Venice) is to employ strangers in their wars; but shall a poet thence fancy that they will set a negro to be their general; or trust a Moor to defend them against the Turk? With us, a Blackamoor might rise to be a trumpeter, but Shakspeare would not have him less than a lieutenant-general. With us, a Moor might marry some little drab or small-coal wench; Shakspeare would provide him the daughter and heir of some great lord, or privy-counsellor; and all the town should reckon it a very suitable match: yet the English are not bred up with that hatred and aversion to the Moors as the Venetians, who suffer by a perpetual hostility from them,

'Littora littoribus contraria.' "

Our author is as severe on Othello's character, as on his exaltation and colour.

"Othello is made a Venetian general. We see nothing done by him, nor related concerning him, that comports with the condition of a general, or, indeed, of a man, unless the killing himself to avoid a death the law was about to inflict upon him. When his jealousy had wrought him up to a resolution of his taking revenge for the supposed injury, he sets Iago to the fighting part to kill Cassio, and chooses himself to murder the silly woman, his wife, that was like to make no resistance."

Mr. Rymer next undertakes to resent the affront put on the army by the making Iago a soldier.

"But what is most intolerable is Iago. He is no Blackamoor soldier, so we may be sure he should be like other soldiers of our acquaintance; yet never in tragedy, nor in comedy, nor in nature, was a soldier with his character;—take it in the author's own words:

———————some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office.

"Horace describes a soldier otherwise,—*Impyger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer.*

"Shakspeare knew his character of Iago was inconsistent. In this very play he pronounces,

'If thou deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.'———

"This he knew, but to entertain the audience with something new and surprising against common sense and nature, he would pass upon us a close, dissembling, false, insinuating rascal, instead of an open-hearted, frank, plain-dealing soldier, a character constantly worn by them for some thousands of years in the world."

Against "the gentle lady married to the Moor," Mr. Rymer cherishes a most exemplary hatred. He seems to labour for terms strong enough to express the antipathy and scorn he bears her. The following are some of the daintiest:

"There is nothing in the noble Desdemona, that is not below any country kitchen-maid with us."—"No woman bred out of a pig-stye could talk so meanly."

Yet is Mr. Rymer no less enraged at her death than at her life.

"Here (he exclaims in an agony of passion) a noble Venetian lady is to be murdered by our poet, in sober sadness, purely for being a fool. No pagan poet but would have found some machine for her deliverance. Pegasus would have strained hard to have brought old Perseus on his back, time enough to rescue this Andromeda from so foul a monster. Has our Christian poetry no generosity, no bowels? Ha, ha, Sir Launcelot! Ha, Sir George! Will no ghost leave the shades for us in extremity, to save a distressed damsel?"

On the "*expression*," that is, we presume, the poetry of the work, Mr. Rymer does not think it necessary to dwell; though he admits that "the verses rumbling in our ears, are of good use to help off the action." On those of Shakspeare he passes this summary judgment: "In the neighing of a horse, or in the growling of a mastiff, there is a meaning, there is as lively expression, and may I say more humanity, than many times in the tragical flights of Shakspeare. Having settled this trivial point, he invites the reader "to step among the scenes, to observe the conduct on this tragedy."

In examining the first scene of *Othello*, our critic weightily reprehends the sudden and startling manner in which Iago and Roderigo inform Brabantio of his daughter's elopement with the Moor. He regards their abruptness as an unpardonable violation of decorum, and, by way of contrast to its rudeness, informs us, that

"In former days there wont to be kept at the courts of princes somebody in a fool's coat, that in pure simplicity might let slip something, which made way for the ill news, and blunted the shock, which otherwise might have come too violent on the party."

Mr. Rymer shows the council of Venice no quarter. He thus daringly scrutinizes their proceedings.

"By their conduct and manner of talk, a body must strain hard to fancy the scene at Venice, and not rather at some of our Cinque ports, where the baily and his fishermen are knocking their heads together on account of some whale; or some terrible broil on the coast. But to show them true Venetians, the maritime affairs stick not on their hand; the public may sink or swim. They will sit up all night to hear a Doctors' Commons matrimonial cause; and have the merits of the cause laid open to 'em, that they may decide it before they stir. What can be pleaded to keep awake their attention so wonderfully?"

Here the critic enters into a fitting abuse of Othello's defence to the senate; expresses his disgust at the "eloquence which kept them up all night," and his amaze at their apathy, notwithstanding the strangeness of the marriage. He complains, that

"Instead of starting at the prodigy, every one is familiar with Desdemona, as if he were her own natural father; they rejoice in her good fortune, and wish their own daughters as hopefully married. Should the poet (he continues) have provided such a husband for an only daughter of any peer in England, the Blackamoor must have changed his skin to look our House of Lords in the face."

Our critic next complains, that, in the second act, the poet shows the action (he "knows not how many leagues off") in the island of Cyprus, without "our Bayes" (as he pleasantly denominates Shakspeare) having made any provision of transport ships for the audience. The first scene in Cyprus is then "cut up" in a way which might make the most skilful of modern reviewers turn pale with envy. After noticing the preliminary dialogue, Mr. Rymer observes, "now follows a long rabble of Jack Pudden farce between Iago and Desdemona, that runs on with all the little plays, jingle, and trash, below the patience of any country kitchen maid with her sweetheart. The Venetian Donna is hard put to it for pastime; and this is all when they are newly got on shore from a dismal tempest, and when every moment she might expect to hear her Lord, (as she calls him,) that she runs so mad after, is arrived or lost." Our author, therefore, accuses Shakspeare of "unhallowing the theatre, profaning the name of tragedy, and instead of representing men and manners, turning all morality, good-sense, and humanity, into mockery and derision."

Mr. Rymer contends, that Desdemona's solicitations for Cassio were in themselves more than enough to rouse Othello's jealousy. "Iago can now (he observes) only *actum agere*, and vex the audience with a nauseous repetition." This remark introduces the following criticism on the celebrated scene in the third act, between Othello and Iago, which is curious, not only as an instance of perverted reasoning, but as it shows that, in the performance, some great histrionic power must have been formerly exerted, not unlike the energy of which we, in witnessing this tragedy, have been spectators.

"Whence comes it, then, that this is the top scene; the scene that raises *Othello* above all other tragedies at our theatres? it is purely from the *action;* from the mops and the mows, the grimace, the grins, and gesticulation. Such scenes as this have made all the world run after Harlequin and Scaramoucio.

"The several degrees of *action* were amongst the ancients distinguished by the cothurnus, the soccus, and the planipes. Had this scene been represented at Old Rome, Othello and Iago must have quitted their buskins; they must have played *barefoot;* for the spectators would not have been content without seeing their podometry, and the jealousy work out at the very toes of them. Words, be they Spanish or Polish, or any inarticulate sound, have the same effect: they can only serve to distinguish, and, as it were, beat time to the action. But here we see a known language does wofully encumber and clog the operation; as either forced, or heavy, or trifling, or incoherent, or improper, or most improbable. When no words interpose to spoil the conceit, every one interprets, as he likes best; so in that memorable dispute between Panurge and our English philosopher in *Rabelais*, performed without a word speaking, the theologians, physicians, and surgeons, made one inference; the lawyers, civilians, and canonists, drew another conclusion more to their mind."

Mr. Rymer thus objects to the superlative villany of Iago, on his advising Desdemona's murder.

"Iago had some pretence to be discontent with Othello and Cassio, and what passed hitherto was the operation of revenge. Desdemona had never done him any harm; always kind to him, and to his wife; was his countrywoman, a dame of quality. For him to abet her murder, shows nothing of a soldier, nothing of a man, nothing of nature in it. The ordinary of Newgate never had the like monster to pass under his examination. Can it be any diversion to see a rogue beyond what the devil ever finished? or would it be any instruction to an audience? Iago could desire no better than to set Cassio and Othello, his two enemies, by the ears together, so that he might have been revenged on them both at once; and choosing for his own share the murder of Desdemona, he had the opportunity to play booty, and save the poor harmless wretch. But the poet must do every thing by contraries; to surprise the audience still with something horrible and prodigious, beyond any human imagination. At this rate, he must outdo the devil, to be a poet in the rank with Shakspeare."

Mr. Rymer is decorously enraged, to think that the tragedy should turn on a handkerchief. "Why," he asks in virtuous indignation, "was not this called the tragedy of the handkerchief? what can be more absurd than (as Quintilian expresses it) *in parvibus* (*sic*) *litibus has tragedias movere?* We have heard of Fortunatus, his purse, and of the invisible cloak long ago worn thread-bare, and stowed up in the wardrobe of obsolete romances; one might think that were a fitter place for this handkerchief than that it, at this time of day, be worn on the stage, to raise everywhere all this clutter and turmoil." And again, "the handkerchief is so remote a trifle, no booby on this side Mauritania could make any consequence from it."

Our author suggests a felicitous alteration of the catastrophe of *Othello*. He proposes, that the handkerchief, when lost, should have been folded in the bridal couch; and when Othello was stifling Desdemona,

"The fairy napkin might have started up to disarm his fury, and stop his ungracious mouth. Then might she (in a trance for fear) have lain as dead. Then might he, (believing her dead,) touched with remorse, have honestly cut his own throat, by the good leave, and with the applause, of all the spectators; who might thereupon have gone home with a quiet mind, admiring the beauty of providence, fairly and truly represented on the theatre."

The following is the summing up and catastrophe of this marvellous criticism:

"What can remain with the audience to carry home with them from this sort of poetry, for their use and edification? How can it work, unless (instead of settling the mind and purging our passions) to delude our senses, disorder our thoughts, addle our brain, pervert our affections, hair our imaginations, corrupt our appetite—and fill our head with vanity, confusion, *tintamarra*, and jingle-jangle, beyond what all the parish clerks of London, with their Old Testament farces and interludes, in Richard the Second's time, could ever pretend to? Our only hopes, for the good of their souls, can be that these people go to the playhouse as they do to church—to sit still, look on one another, make no reflection, nor mind the play more than they would a sermon.

"There is in this play some burlesque, some humour, and ramble of comical wit, some show, and some *mimicry* to divert the spectators; but the tragical part is clearly none other than a bloody farce, without salt or savor."

Our author's criticism on *Julius Cæsar* is very scanty, compared with that of *Othello*, but it is not less decisive. Indeed, his classical zeal here sharpens his critical rage; and he is incensed against Shakspeare, not only as offending the dignity of the tragic muse, but the memory of the noblest Romans. "He might," exclaims the indignant critic, "be familiar with Othello and Iago, as his own natural acquaintance, but Cæsar and Brutus were above his conversation; to put them in fools' coats, and make them Jack Puddens in the Shakspeare dress, is a sacrilege beyond any thing in Spelman. The truth is, this author's head was full of villanous, unnatural images—and history has furnished him with great names, thereby to recommend them to the world, by writing over them—*This is Brutus, this is Cicero, this is Cæsar.*" He affirms, "that the language Shakspeare puts into the mouth of Brutus would not suit or be convenient, unless from some son of the shambles, or some natural offspring of the butchery." He abuses the poet for making the conspirators dispute about day-break—seriously chides him for not allowing the noble Brutus a watch-candle in his chamber on this important night, rather than puzzling his man, Lucius, to grope in the dark for a flint and tinder-box to get the taper lighted—speaks of the quarrel scene between Brutus and Cassius, as that in which "they are to play a prize, a trial of skill in huffing and swaggering like two drunken Hectors of a two-penny reckoning." And finally, alluding to the epilogue of Laberius, forced by the emperor to become an actor, he thus sums up his charges:

"This may show with what indignity our poet treats the noblest Romans. But there is no other cloth in his wardrobe. Every one must wear a fool's coat that comes to be dressed by him; nor is he more civil to the ladies—Portia, in good manners, might have challenged more respect; she that shines a glory of the first magnitude in the gallery of heroic dames, is with our poet scarce one remove from a natural; she is the own cousin-german of one piece, the very same impertinent silly flesh and blood with Desdemona. Shakspeare's genius lay for comedy and humour. In tragedy he appears quite out of his element; his brains are turned—he raves and rambles without any coherence, any spark of reason, or any rule to control him, to set bounds to his phrensy."

One truth, though the author did not understand it, is told in this critic on *Julius Cæsar;* that Shakspeare's "senators and his orators had their learning and education at the same school, be they Venetians, Ottamites, or noble Romans." They drew, in their golden urns, from the deep fountain of humanity, those living waters which lose not their sweetness in the changes of man's external condition.

These attacks on Shakspeare are very curious, as evincing how gradual has been the increase of his fame. Their whole tone shows that the author was not advancing what he thought the world would regard as paradoxical or strange. He speaks as one with authority to decide. We look now on his work amazedly; and were it put forth by a writer of our times, should regard it as "the very ecstasy of madness." Such is the lot of genius. However small the circle of cotemporary admirers, it must "gather fame" as time rolls on. It appeals to feelings which cannot alter. The minds who once have deeply felt it, can never lose the impression at first made upon them—they transmit it to others, by whom it is extended to those who are worthy to treasure it. Its stability and duration at length awaken the attention of the world, which thus acknowledges the sanction of time, and professes an admiration for the author, which it only feels for his name. We should not, however, have thus dwelt on the attacks of Rymer, had we regarded them merely as objects of wonder, or as proofs of the partial influence of Shakspeare's genius. They are far from deserving unmingled scorn. They display, at least, an honest, unsophisticated hatred, which is better than the maudlin admiration of Shakspeare, expressed by those who were deluded by Ireland's forgeries. Their author has a heartiness, an earnestness almost romantic, which we cannot despise, though directed against our idol. With a singular obtuseness to poetry, he has a chivalric devotion to all that he regards as excellent and grand. He looks on the supposed errors of the poet as moral crimes. He confounds fiction with fact—grows warm in defence of shadows—feels a violation of poetical justice, as a wrong conviction by a jury—moves a habeas corpus for all damsels imprisoned in romance—and, if the bard kills those of his characters who deserve to live, pronounces judgment on him as in case of felony, without benefit of clergy. He is the Don Quixote of criticism. Like the hero of Cervantes, he is roused to avenge fictitious injuries, and would demolish the scenic exhibition in his disinterested rage. In one sense he does more honour to the poet than any other writer, for he seems to regard him as an arbiter of life and death—responsible only to the critic for the administration of his powers.

Mr. Rymer has his own stately notions of what is proper for tragedy. He is zealous for poetical justice; and as he thinks that vice cannot be punished too severely, and yet that the poet ought to leave his victims objects of pity, he protests against the introduction of very wicked characters. "Therefore," says he, "among the ancients we find no malefactors of this kind; a wilful murderer is, with them, as strange and unknown as a parricide to the old Romans. Yet need we not fancy that they were squeamish, or unacquainted with many of those great *lumping* crimes in that age; when we remember their Œdipus, Orestes, or Medea. But they took care to wash the viper, to cleanse away the venom, and with such art to prepare the morsel; they made it all junket to the taste, and all physic in the operation."

Our author understands exactly the balance of power in the affections. He would dispose of all the poet's characters to a hair, according to his own rules of fitness. He would marshal them in array as in a procession, and mark out exactly what each ought to do or suffer. According to him, so much of presage and no more should be given—such a degree of sorrow, and no more ought a character endure; vengeance should rise precisely to a given height, and be executed by a certain appointed hand. He would regulate the conduct of fictitious heroes as accurately as of real beings, and often reasons well on his own poetic decalogue. "Amintor," says he, (speaking of a character in the *Maid's Tragedy*) "should have begged the king's pardon; should have suffered all the racks and tortures a tyrant could inflict; and from Perillus's bull should have still bellowed out that eternal truth, that *his promise was to be kept*—that he is true to Aspatia, that he dies for his mistress! Then would his memory have been precious and sweet to after ages; and the midsummer maidens would have offered their garlands all at his grave."

Mr. Rymer is an enthusiastic champion for the poetical prerogatives of kings. No courtier ever contended more strenuously for their divine right in real life, than he for their pre-eminence in tragedy. "We are to presume," observes he gravely, "the greatest virtues, where we find the highest rewards; and though it is not necessary that all heroes should be kings, yet undoubtedly all crowned heads, by poetical right, are heroes. This character is a flower, a prerogative, so certain, so indispensably annexed to the crown, as by no poet, or parliament of poets, ever to be invaded." Thus does he lay down the rules of life and death for his regal domain of tragedy: "If I mistake not, in poetry no woman is to kill a man, except her quality gives her the advantage above him; nor is a servant to kill the master, nor a private man, much less a subject to kill a king, nor on the contrary. Poetical decency will not suffer death to be dealt to each other, by such persons whom the laws of duel allow not to enter the lists together." He admits, however, that "there may be circumstances that alter the case: as where there is sufficient ground of partiality in an audience, either upon the account of religion (as Rinaldo or Riccardo, in Tasso, might kill Soliman, or any other Turkish king or great Sultan) or else in favour of our country, for then a private English hero might overcome a king of some rival nation." How pleasant a master of the ceremonies is he in the regions of fiction—regulating the niceties of murder like the decorums of a dance—with an amiable preference for his own religion and country!

These notions, however absurd, result from an indistinct sense of a peculiar dignity and grandeur essential to tragedy—and surely this feeling was not altogether deceptive. Some there are, indeed, who trace the emotions of strange delight which tragedy awakens, entirely to the love of strong excitement, which is gratified by spectacles of anguish. According to their doctrine, the more nearly the representation of sorrow approaches reality, the more intense will be the gratification of the spectator. Thus Burke has gravely asserted, that if the audience at a tragedy were informed of an execution about to take place in the neighbourhood, they would leave the theatre to witness it. We believe that experience does not warrant a speculation so dishonourable to our nature. How few, except those of the grossest minds, are ever attracted by the punishment of capital offenders! Even of those whom the dreadful infliction draws together, how many are excited merely by curiosity, and a desire to view the last mortal agony, which in a form more or less terrible all must endure! We think that if, during the representation of a tragedy, the audience were compelled to feel vividly that a fellow-creature was struggling in the agonies of a violent death, many of them would retire —but not to the scene of horror. The reality of human suffering would come too closely home to their hearts, to permit their enjoyment of the fiction. How often, during the scenic exhibition of intolerable agony—unconsecrated and unredeemed—have we been compelled to relieve our hearts from a weight too heavy for endurance, by calling to mind that the woes are fictitious! It cannot be the highest triumph of an author, whose aim is to heighten the enjoyments of life, that he forces us, in our own defence, to escape from his power. If the pleasure derived from tragedy were merely occasioned by the love of excitement, the pleasure would be in proportion to the depth and the reality of the sorrow. Then would *The Gamester* be more pathetic than *Othello*, and *Isabella* call forth deeper admiration than *Macbeth* or *Lear*. Then would George

Barnwell be the loftiest tragedy, and the *Newgate Calendar* the sweetest collection of pathetic tales. To name those instances, is sufficiently to refute the position on which they are founded.

Equally false is the opinion, that the pleasure derived from tragedy arises from a source of individual security, while others are suffering. There are no feelings more distantly removed from the selfish, than those which genuine tragedy awakens. We are carried at its representation out of ourselves, and "the ignorant present time,"—by earnest sympathy with the passions and the sorrows, not of ourselves, but of our nature. We feel our community with the general heart of man. The encrustments of selfishness and low passion are rent asunder, and the warm tide of human sympathies gushes triumphantly from its secret and divine sources.

It is not, then, in bringing sorrow home in its dreadful realities to our bosoms, nor in painting it so as to make us cling to our selfish gratifications with more earnest joy, that the tragic poet moves and enchants us. Grief is but the means—the necessary means indeed—by which he accomplishes his lofty purposes. The grander qualities of the soul cannot be developed—the deepest resources of comfort within it cannot be unveiled—the solemnities of its destiny cannot be shadowed forth—except in peril and in suffering. Hence peril and suffering become instruments of the Tragic Muse. But these are not, in themselves, those things which we delight to contemplate. Various, indeed, yet most distinct from these, are the sources of that deep joy that tragedy produces. Sometimes we are filled with a delight not dissimilar to that which the Laocoon excites—an admiration of the more than mortal beauty of the attitudes and of the finishing—and even of the terrific sublimity of the folds in which the links of fate involve the characters. When we look at that inimitable group, we do not merely rejoice in a sympathy with extreme suffering—but are enchanted with tender loveliness, and feel that the sense of distress is softened by the exquisite touches of genius. Often, in tragedy, our hearts are elevated by thoughts "informed with nobleness" —by the view of heroic greatness of soul—by the contemplation of affections which death cannot conquer. It is not the depth of anguish which calls forth delicious tears—it is some sweet piece of self-denial—some touch of human gentleness, in the midst of sorrow—some "glorious triumph of exceeding love," which suffuses our "subdued eyes," and mellows our hearts. Death itself often becomes the source of sublime consolations: seen through the poetical medium, it often seems to fall on the wretched "softly and lightly, as a passing cloud." It is felt as the blessed means of re-uniting faithful and ill-fated lovers—it is the pillow on which the long struggling patriot rests. Often it exhibits the noblest triumph of the spiritual over the material part of man. The intense ardour of a spirit that "o'er-inform'd its tenement of clay"—yet more quenchless in the last conflict, is felt to survive the struggle, and to triumph even in the victory which power has achieved over its earthly frame. In short, it is the high duty of the tragic poet to exhibit humanity sublimest in its distresses—to dignify or to sweeten sorrow—to exhibit eternal energies wrestling with each other, or with the accidents of the world—and to disclose the depth and the immortality of the affections. He must represent humanity as a rock, beaten, and sometimes overspread, with the mighty waters of anguish, but still unshaken. We look to him for hopes, principles, resting places of the soul—for emotions which dignify our passions, and consecrate our sorrows. A brief retrospect of tragedy will show, that in every age when it has triumphed, it has appealed not to the mere love of excitement, but to the perceptions of beauty in the soul—to the yearnings of the deepest affections—to the aspirations after grandeur and permanence, which never leave man even in his errors and afflictions.

Nothing could be more dignified than the old tragedy of the Greeks. Its characters were demi-gods, or heroes; its subjects were often the destinies of those lines of the mighty, which had their beginning among the eldest deities. So far, in the development of their plots, were the poets from appealing to mere sensibility, that they scarcely deigned to awaken an anxious throb, or draw forth a human tear. In their works, we see the catastrophe from the beginning, and feel its influence at every step, as we advance majestically along the solemn avenue which it closes. There is little struggle; the doom of the heroes is fixed on high, and they pass, in sublime composure, to fulfil their destiny. Their sorrows are awful, their deaths religious sacrifices to the power of Heaven. The glory that plays about their heads is the prognostic of their fate. A consecration is shed over their brief and sad career, which takes away all the ordinary feelings of suffering. Their afflictions are sacred, their passions inspired by the gods, their fates prophesied in elder time, their deaths almost festal. All things are tinged with sanctity or with beauty in the Greek tragedies. Bodily pain is made sublime; destitution and wretchedness are rendered sacred; and the very grove of the Furies is represented as ever fresh and green. How grand is the suffering of Prometheus, how sweet the resolution of Antigone, how appalling, yet how magnificent the last vision of Cassandra, how reconciling and tender, yet how awful, the circumstances attendant on the death of Œdipus! And how rich a poetic atmosphere do the Athenian poets breathe over all the creations of their genius! Their exquisite groups appear in all the venerableness of hoar antiquity; yet in the distinctness and in the bloom of unfading youth. All the human figures are seen, sublime in attitude, and exquisite in finishing; while, in the dim background, appear the shapes of eldest gods, and the solemn abstractions of life, fearfully imbodied—"Death the skeleton, and time the shadow!"—Surely there is something more in all this, than a vivid picture of the sad realities of our human existence.

The Romans failed in tragedy, because their love of mere excitement was too keen to permit them to enjoy it. They had "supped full of horrors." Familiar with the thoughts of real slaughter, they could not endure the philosophic and poetic view of distress in which it is softened and made sacred. Their imaginations were too practical for a genuine poet to affect. Hence, in the plays which bear the name of Seneca, horrors are heaped on horrors—the most unpleasing of the Greek fictions (as that of Medea) are re-written and made ghastly—and every touch that might redeem is carefully effaced by the poet. Still, the grandeur of old tragedy is there—still "the gorgeous pall comes sweeping by"—still the dignity survives, though the beauty has faded.

In the productions of Shakspeare, doubtless, tragedy was divested of something of its external grandeur. The mythology of the ancient world had lost its living charm. Its heroic forms remained, indeed, unimpaired in beauty or grace, in the distant regions of the imagination, but they could no longer occupy the foreground of poetry. Men required forms of flesh and blood, animated by human passion, and awakening human sympathy. Shakspeare, therefore, sought for his materials nearer to common humanity than the elder bards. He took also, in each play, a far wider range than they had dared to occupy. He does not, therefore, convey so completely as they did one grand harmonious feeling, by each of his works. But who shall affirm, that the tragedy of Shakspeare has not an elevation of its own, or that it produces pleasure only by exhibiting spectacles of varied anguish? The reconciling power of his imagination, and the genial influences of his philosophy are ever softening and consecrating sorrow. He scatters the rainbow hues of fancy over objects in themselves repulsive. He nicely developes the "soul of goodness in things evil," to console and delight us. He blends all the most glorious imagery of nature with the passionate expressions of affliction. He sometimes, in a single image, expresses an intense sentiment in all its depth, yet identifies it with the widest and the grandest objects of creation. Thus he makes Timon, in the bitterness of his soul, set up his tomb on the beached shore, that the wave of the ocean may once a day cover him with its embossed foam—expanding an individual feeling into the extent of the vast and eternal sea; yet making us feel it as more intense, from the very sublimity of the image. The mind can always rest without anguish on his catastrophies, however mournful. Sad as the story of Romeo and Juliet is, it does not lacerate or tear the heart, but relieves it of its weight by awakening sweet tears. We shrink not at their tomb, which we feel has set a seal on their loves and virtues, but almost long with them there "to set up our everlasting rest." We do not feel unmingled agony at the death of Lear; when his aged heart, which has been beaten so fearfully, is at rest—and his withered frame, late o'er-informed with terrific energy, reposes with his pious child. We are not shocked and harrowed even when Hamlet falls; for we feel that he is unfit for the bustle of this world, and his own gentle contemplations on death have deprived it of its terrors. In Shakspeare, the passionate is always steeped in the beautiful. Sometimes he diverts sorrow with tender conceits, which, like little fantastic rocks, break its streams into sparkling cascades and circling eddies. And when it must flow on, deep and still, he bends over it branching foliage and graceful flowers—whose leaves are seen in its dark bosom, all of one sober and harmonious hue—but in their clearest form and most delicate proportions.

The other dramatists of Shakspeare's age, deprived, like him, of classical resources, and far inferior to him in imagination and wisdom, strove to excite a deep interest by the wildness of their plots, and the strangeness of the incidents with which their scenes were crowded. Their bloody tragedies are, however, often relieved by passages of exquisite sweetness. Their terrors, not humanized like those of Shakspeare, are yet far removed from the vulgar or disgusting. Sometimes, amidst the gloom of continued crimes, which often follow each other in stern and awful succession, are fair pictures of more than earthly virtue, tinted with the dews of heaven, and encircled with celestial glories. The scene in *The Broken Heart*, where Calantha, amidst the festal crowd, receives the news of the successive deaths of those dearest to her in the world, yet dances on—and that in which she composedly settles all the affairs of her empire, and then dies smiling by the body of her contracted lord—are in the loftiest spirit of tragedy. They combine the dignity and majestic suffering of the ancient drama, with the intenseness of the modern. The last scene unites beauty, tenderness, and grandeur, in one harmonious and stately picture—as sublime as any single scene in the tragedies of Æschylus or Shakspeare.

Of the succeeding tragedians of England, the frigid imitators of the French Drama, it is necessary to say but little. The elevation of their plays is only on the stilts of declamatory language. The proportions and symmetry of their plots are but an accordance with arbitrary rules. Yet was there no reason to fear that the sensibilities of their audience should be too strongly excited, without the alleviations of fancy or of grandeur, because their sorrows are unreal, turgid, and fantastic. *Cato* is a classical petrifaction. Its tenderest expression is, "Be sure you place his urn near mine," which comes over us like a sentiment frozen in the utterance. Congreve's *Mourning Bride* has a greater air of magnificence than most tragedies of his or of the succeeding time; but its declamations fatigue, and its labyrinthine plot perplexes. *Venice Preserved* is cast in the mould of dignity and of grandeur; but the characters want nobleness, the poetry coherence, and the sentiments truth.

The plays of Hill, Hughes, Philips, Murphy, and Rowe, are dialogues, sometimes ill and sometimes well written—occasionally stately in numbers, but never touching the soul. It would be unjust to mention Young and Thomson as the writers of tragedies.

The old English feeling of tender beauty has at last begun to revive. Lamb's *John Woodvil*, despised by the critics, and for a while neglected by the people, awakened those gentle pulses of deep joy which had long forgotten to beat. Here first, after a long interval, instead of the pompous swelling of inane declamation, the music of humanity was heard in its sweetest tones. The air of freshness breathed over its forest scenes, the delicate grace of its images, its nice disclosure of consolations and venerablenesses in the nature of man, and the exquisite beauty of its catastrophe, where the stony remorse of the hero is melted into child-like tears, as he kneels on the little hassock where he had often kneeled in infancy, are truly Shakspearean. Yet this piece, with all its delicacies in the reading, wants that striking scenic effect without which a tragedy cannot succeed on the stage. The *Remorse* of Coleridge is a noble poem; but its metaphysical clouds, though fringed with golden imaginations, brood too heavily over it. In the detached scenes of Barry Cornwall, passages of the daintiest beauty abound—the passion is every where breathed tenderly forth, in strains which are "silver sweet"—and the sorrow is relieved by tenderness the most endearing. Here may be enjoyed "a perpetual feast of nectared sweets, where no crude surfeit reigns."—In these—and in the works of Shiel, and even of Maturin—are the elements whence a tragedy more noble and complete might be moulded, than any which has astonished the world since *Macbeth* and *Lear*. We long to see a stately subject for tragedy chosen by some living aspirant—the sublime struggle of high passions for the mastery displayed—the sufferings relieved by glorious imaginations, yet brought home to our souls, and the whole conveying one grand and harmonious impression to the general heart. Let us hope that this triumph will not long be wanting, to complete the intellectual glories of our age.

REVIEW OF CIBBER'S APOLOGY FOR HIS LIFE.

[Retrospective Review, No. 2.]

There are, perhaps, few individuals, of intense personal conciseness, whose lives, written by themselves, would be destitute of interest or of value. Works of this description enlarge the number of our intimacies without inconvenience; awaken, with a peculiar vividness, pleasant recollections of our own past career; and excite that sympathy with the little sorrows, cares, hopes, and enjoyments of others, which infuses new tenderness into all the pulses of individual joy. The qualification which is most indispensable to the writer of such auto-biographies, is vanity. If he does not dwell with gusto on his own theme, he will communicate no gratification to his reader. He must not, indeed, fancy himself too outrageously what he is not, but should have the highest sense of what he is, the happiest relish for his own peculiarities, and the most confident assurance that they are matters of great interest to the world. He who feels thus, will not chill us by cold generalities, but trace with an exquisite minuteness all the felicities of his life, all the well remembered moments of gratified vanity, from the first beatings of hope and first taste of delight, to the time when age is gladdened by the reflected tints of young enterprise and victory. Thus it was with Colley Cibber; and, therefore, his Apology for his own life is one of the most amusing books that have ever been written. He was not, indeed, a very wise or lofty character—nor did he affect great virtue or wisdom—but openly derided gravity, bade defiance to the serious pursuits of life, and honestly preferred his own lightness of heart and of head, to knowledge the most extensive or thought the most profound. He was vain even of his vanity. At the very commencement of his work, he avows his determination not to repress it, because it is part of himself, and therefore will only increase the resemblance of the picture. Rousseau did not more clearly lay open to the world the depths and inmost recesses of his soul, than Cibber his little foibles and minikin weaknesses. The philosopher dwelt not more intensely on the lone enthusiasm of his spirit, on the alleviations of his throbbing soul, on the long draughts of rapture which he eagerly drank in from the loveliness of the universe, than the player on his early aspirings for scenic applause, and all the petty triumphs and mortifications of his passion for the favour of the town. How real and speaking is the description which he gives of his fond desires for the bright course of an actor—of his light-hearted pleasure, when, in the little part of the Chaplain, in *The Orphan*, he received his first applause—and of his highest transport, when, the next day, Goodman, a retired actor of note, clapping him on the shoulder at a rehearsal, exclaimed, with an oath, that he must make a good actor, which almost took away his breath, and fairly drew tears into his eyes! The spirit of gladness, which gave such exquisite keenness to his youthful appetite for praise, sustained him through all the changes of his fortune, enabling him to make a jest of penury, assisting him to gather fresh courage from every slight, adding zest to every success, until he arrived at the high dignity of "Patentee of the Theatre Royal." When "he no revenue had but his good spirits to feed and clothe him," these were ample. His vanity was to him a kingdom. The airiest of town butterflies, he sipped of the sweets of pleasure wherever its stray gifts were found; sometimes in the tavern among the wits, but chiefly in the golden sphere of the theatre,—that magic circle whose majesties do not perish with the chances of the world. In reading his life, we become possessed of his own feathery lightness, and seem to follow the course of the gayest and the emptiest of all the bubbles, that, in his age of happy trifling, floated along the shallow but glittering stream of existence.

The Life of Cibber is peculiarly a favourite with us, not only by reason of the superlative coxcombry which it exhibits, but of the due veneration which it yields to an art too frequently under-rated, even among those to whose gratification it ministers. If the degree of enjoyment and of benefit produced by an art be any test of its excellence, there are few, indeed, which will yield to that of the actor. His exertions do not, indeed, often excite emotions so deep or so pure as those which the noblest poetry inspires, but their genial influences are far more widely extended. The beauties of the most gifted of bards, find in the bosoms of a very small number an answering sympathy. Even of those who talk familiarly of Spenser and Milton, there are few who have fairly read, and still fewer who truly feel, their divinest effusions. It is only in the theatre, that any image of the real grandeur of humanity—any picture of generous heroism and noble self-sacrifice—is poured on the imaginations, and sent warm to the hearts of the vast body of the people. There, are eyes, familiar through months and years only with mechanic toil, suffused with natural tears. There, are the deep fountains of hearts, long encrusted by narrow cares, burst open, and a holy light is sent in on the long sunken forms of the imagination, which shone fair and goodly in boyhood by their own light, but have since been sealed and forgotten in their "sunless treasuries." There, do the lowest and most ignorant catch their only glimpse of that poetic radiance which sheds its glory around our being. While they gaze, they forget the petty concerns of their own individual lot, and recognise and rejoice in their kindred with a nature capable of high emprise, of meek suffering, and of defiance to the powers of agony and the grave. They are elevated and softened into men. They are carried beyond the ignorant present time; feel the past and the future on the instant, and kindle as they gaze on the massive realities of human virtue, or on those fairy visions which are the gleaming foreshadows of golden years, which hereafter shall bless the world. Their horizon is suddenly extended from the narrow circle of low anxieties and selfish joys, to the farthest boundaries of our moral horizon; and they perceive, in clear vision, the rocks of defence for their nature, which their fellow men have been privileged to raise. While they feel that "which gives an awe of things above them," their souls are expanded in the heartiest sympathy with the vast body of their fellows. A thousand hearts are swayed at once by the same emotion, as the high grass of the meadow yields, as a single blade, to the breeze which sweeps over it. Distinctions of fortune, rank, talent, age, all give way to the warm tide of emotion, and every class feel only as partakers in one primal sympathy, "made of one blood," and equal in the sanctities of their being. Surely the art that produces an effect like this—which separates, as by a divine alchemy, the artificial from the real in humanity—which supplies to the artisan in the capital, the place of those woods and free airs, and mountain streams, which insensibly harmonize the peasant's character—which gives the poorest to feel the old grandeur of tragedy, sweeping by with sceptred pall—which makes the heart of the child leap with strange joy, and enables the old man to fancy himself again a child—is worthy of no mean place among the arts which refine our manners, by exalting our conceptions!

It has sometimes been objected to the theatrical artist, that he merely repeats the language and imbodies the conceptions of the poet. But the allegation, though specious, is unfounded. It has been completely established, by a great and genial critic of our own time, that the deeper beauties of poetry cannot be shaped forth by the actor,[*] and it is equally true, that the poet has little share in the highest triumphs of the performer. It may, at first, appear a paradox, but is, nevertheless, proved by experience, that the fanciful cast of the language has very little to do with the effect of an acted tragedy. Mrs. Siddons would not have been less than she is, though Shakspeare had never written. She displayed genius as exalted in the characters drawn by Moore, Southern, Otway, and Rowe, as in those of the first of human bards. Certain great situations are all the performer needs, and the grandest emotions of the soul all that he can imbody. He can derive little aid from the noblest imaginations or the richest fantasies of the author. He may, indeed, by his own genius, like the matchless artist to whom we have just alluded, consecrate sorrow, dignify emotion, and kindle the imagination as well as awaken the sympathies. But this will be accomplished, not by the texture of the words spoken, but by the living magic of the eye, of the tone, of the action; by all those means which belong exclusively to the actor. When Mrs. Siddons cast that unforgotten gaze of blank horror on the corpse of Beverley, was she indebted to the playwright for the conception? When, as Arpasia, in *Tamerlane*, she gave that look of inexpressible anguish, in which the breaking of the heart might be seen, and the cold and rapid advances of death traced—and fell without a word, as if struck by the sudden blow of destiny—in that moment of unearthly power, when she astonished and terrified even her oldest admirers, and after which, she lay herself really senseless from the intensity of her own emotion—where was the marvellous stage direction, the pregnant hint in the frigid declamatory text, from which she wrought this amazing picture, too perilous to be often repeated? Do the words "I'm satisfied," in *Cato*, convey the slightest image of that high struggle—that contest between nature long repressed and stoic pride—which Mr. Kemble in an instant imbodied to the senses, and impressed on the soul for ever? Or, to descend into the present time and the lowlier drama, does the perusal of *The School of Reform* convey any vestige of that rough sublimity which breathes in the Tyke of Emery? Are Mr. Liston's looks out of book, gotten by heart, invented for him by writers of farces? Is there any fancy of invention in its happiest mood—any tracings of mortal hand in books—like to the marvellous creations which Munden multiplies at will? These are not to be "constrained by mastery" of the pen, and defy not only the power of an author to conceive, but to describe them. The best actors, indeed, in their happiest efforts, are little more indebted to the poet, than he is to the graces of nature which he seizes, than the sculptor to living forms, or the grandest painters to history.

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[*] See Mr. Lamb's Essay on the Tragedies of Shakspeare, as adapted to representation on the stage—a piece, which combines more of profound thought, with more of deep feeling and exquisite beauty, than any criticism with which we are acquainted.

Still less weight is there in the objection, that part of the qualities of an actor, as his form and voice, are the gifts of nature, which imply no merit in their possessor. They are no more independent of will, than the sensibility and imagination of the bard. Our admiration is not determined by merit, but by beauty; we contemplate angelic purity of soul with as tender a love as virtue, which has been reared with intense labour among clouds and storms, and follow with as delighted a wonder the quick glances of intuition as the longest and most difficult researches. The actor exhibits as high a perception of natural grace, as fine an acquaintance with the picturesque in attitude, as the sculptor. If the forms of his imagination do not stand for ages in marble, they live and breathe before us while they last—change, with all the variations of passion—and "discourse most eloquent music." They sometimes, as in the case of Mr. Kemble's Roman characters, supply the noblest illustrations of history. The story of Coriolanus is to us no dead letter; the nobleness of Cato is an abstract idea no longer. We seem to behold even now the calm approaches of the mighty stoic to his end—to look on him, maintaining the forms of Roman liberty to the last, as though he would grasp its trembling relics in his dying hands—and to listen to those solemn tones, now the expiring accents of liberty passing away, and anon the tremulous breathings of uncertain hope for the future. The reality with which these things have been presented to our youthful eyes is a possession for ever—quickening our sympathy with the most august instances of human virtue, and enriching our souls with palpable images of the majesty of old.

It may be said, that if a great actor carries us into times that are past, he rears up no monument which will last in those which are to come. But there are many circumstances to counterbalance and alleviate the shortness of his fame. The anxiety for posthumous renown, though there is something noble in it as abstracted from mere personal desires, is scarcely the loftiest of human emotions. The Homeric poets, who breathed forth their strains to untutored ears, and left no visible traces of their genius, could scarcely anticipate the duration of their works. Shakspeare seems to have thought little in his lifetime of those honours which through all ages will accumulate on his memory. The best benefactors of their race have left the world nothing but their names, and their remembrances in grateful souls. The true poet, perhaps, feels most holily when he thinks only of sharing in the immortality of nature, and "owes no allegiance but the elements." Some feeling not unallied to this, may solace the actor for the short-lived remembrance of his exertions. The images which he vivifies are not traced in paper, nor diffused through the press, nor extant in marble; but are engraven on the fleshly tables of the heart, and last till "life's idle business" ceases. To thousands of the young has he given their "first mild touch of sympathy and thought," their first sense of communion with their kind. As time advances, and the ranks of his living admirers grow thin, the old tell of his feats with a tenderer rapture, and give such vivid hints of his excellence as enable their hearers richly to fancy forth some image of grandeur or delight, which, in their minds at least, is like him. The sweet lustre of his memory thus grows more sacred as it approaches its close, and tenderly vanishes. His name lives still—ever pronounced with happiest feelings and in the happiest hours—and excites us to stretch our thoughts backward into the gladnesses of another age. The gravemaker's work, according to the clown, in *Hamlet*, outlasts all others, even "till doomsday," and the actor's fades away before most others, because it is the very reverse of his gloomy and durable creations. The theatrical picture does not endure because it is the warmest, the most living of the works of art; it is short as human life, because it is as genial. Those are the intensest enjoyments which soonest wither. The fairest graces of nature—those touches of the ethereal scattered over the universe—pass away while they ravish us. Could we succeed in giving permanence to the rainbow, to the delicate shadow, or to the moonbeam on the waters, their light and unearthly charm would be lost for ever. The tender hues of youth would ill exchange their evanescent bloom for an enamel which ages would not destroy. And if "these our actors" must "melt into air, thin air," leaving but soft tracings in the hearts of living admirers—if their images of beauty must fade into the atmosphere of town gayety, until they only lend some delicate graces to those airy clouds which gleam in its distance, and which are not recognised as theirs, they can scarcely complain of the transitoriness which is necessarily connected with the living grace which belongs to no other order of artists.

The work before us, however, may afford better consolation than we can render to actors; for it redeems not the names, but the vivid images of some of the greatest artists of a century ago, from oblivion. Here they are not embalmed, but kept alive—and breathe, in all the glory of their meridian powers, before us. Here Betterton's tones seem yet to melt on the entranced hearer—Nokes yet convulses the full house with laughter on his first appearance—and Mrs. Monfort sinks with her dainty, diving body to the ground, beneath the conscious load of her own attractions. The theatrical portraits in this work are drawn with the highest gusto, and set forth with the richest colouring. The author has not sought, like some admirable critics of this age of criticism, to say as many witty or eloquent things on each artist as possible, but simply to form the most exact likeness, and to give to the drapery the most vivid and appropriate hues. We seem to listen to the prompter's bell—to see the curtain rise—and behold on the scene the goodly shapes of the actors and actresses of another age, in their antique costume, and with all the stately airs and high graces which the town knows no longer.

Betterton is the chief object of our author's admiration; but the account of his various excellencies is too long to extract entire, and perhaps, on account of the spirit of boundless eulogy in which it is written, has less of that nicety of touch which gives so complete an individuality to his pictures of other performers.

The following are perhaps the most interesting parts of the description:

"You have seen a Hamlet perhaps, who, on the first appearance of his father's spirit, has thrown himself into all the straining vociferation requisite to express rage and fury, and the house has thundered with applause; though the misguided actor was all the while (as Shakspeare terms it) tearing a passion into rags.—I am the more bold to offer you this particular instance, because the late Mr. Addison, while I sat by him, to see this scene acted, made the same observation, asking me with some surprise, if I thought Hamlet should be in so violent a passion with the Ghost, which though it might have astonished, it had not provoked him? for you may observe that in this beautiful speech, the passion never rises beyond an almost breathless astonishment, or an impatience, limited by filial reverence, to inquire into the suspected wrongs that may have raised him from his peaceful tomb! and a desire to know what a spirit, so seemingly distressed, might wish or enjoin a sorrowful son to execute towards his future quiet in the grave? This was the light into which Betterton threw this scene; which he opened with a pause of mute amazement! then rising slowly, to solemn, trembling voice, he made the Ghost equally terrible to the spectator as to himself! and in the descriptive part of the natural emotions which the ghastly vision gave him, the boldness of his expostulation was still governed by decency, manly, but not braving; his voice never rising into that seeming outrage, or wild defiance of what he naturally revered. But alas! to preserve this medium, between mouthing, and meaning too little, to keep the attention more pleasingly awake, by a tempered spirit, than by mere vehemence of voice, is, of all the master-strokes of an actor, the most difficult to reach. In this none yet have equalled Betterton.

"A farther excellence in Betterton, was, that he could vary his spirit to the different characters he acted. Those wild impatient starts, that fierce and flashing fire, which he threw into Hotspur, never came from the unruffled temper of his Brutus; (for I have, more than once, seen a Brutus as warm as Hotspur;) when the Betterton Brutus was provoked, in his dispute with Cassius, his spirit flew only to his eye; his steady look alone supplied that terror, which he disdained an intemperance in his voice should rise to. Thus, with a settled dignity of contempt, like an unheeding rock, he repelled upon himself the foam of Cassius. Perhaps the very words of Shakspeare will better let you into my meaning:

> Must I give way, and room, to your rash choler?
> Shall I be frighted when a madman stares?

And a little after;

> There is no terror, Cassius, in your looks! &c.

Not but in some parts of this scene, where he reproaches Cassius, his temper is not under his suppression, but opens into that warmth which becomes a man of virtue; yet this is that hasty spark of anger, which Brutus himself endeavours to excuse."

The account of Kynaston, who, in his youth, before the performance of women on the stage, used to appear in female characters, is very amusing. He was particularly successful in Evadne, in *The Maid's Tragedy*, and always retained "something of a formal gravity in his mien, which was attributed to the stately step he had been so early confined to" in his female attire; the ladies of quality, we are told, used to pride themselves in taking him with them in their coaches to Hyde Park, in his theatrical habit, after the play, which then used to begin at the early hour of four. There was nothing, however, effeminate in his usual style of acting. We are told, that

"He had a piercing eye, and in characters of heroic life, a quick imperious vivacity in his tone of voice, that painted the tyrant truly terrible. There were two plays of Dryden in which he shone, with uncommon lustre; in Aurenge-Zebe, he played Morat, and in Don Sebastian, Muley Moloch; in both these parts, he had a fierce lion-like majesty in his port and utterance, that gave the spectator a kind of trembling admiration."

The following account of this actor's performance in the now neglected character of Henry the Fourth, gives us the most vivid idea of the grave yet gentle majesty, and kingly pathos, which the part requires:

"But above this tyrannical, tumid superiority of character, there is a grave and rational majesty in Shakspeare's Harry the Fourth, which though not so glaring to the vulgar eye, requires thrice the skill and grace to become and support. Of this real majesty, Kynaston was entirely master; here every sentiment came from him, as if it had been his own, as if he had himself, that instant, conceived it, as if he had lost the player, and were the real king he personated! a perfection so rarely found, that very often, in actors of good repute, a certain vacancy of look, inanity of voice, or superfluous gesture, shall unmask the man to the judicious spectator; who from the least of those errors plainly sees the whole but a lesson given him, to be got by heart, from some great author, whose sense is deeper than the repeater's understanding. This true majesty Kynaston had so entire a command of, that when he whispered the following plain line to Hotspur,

> Send us your prisoners, or you'll hear of it!

he conveyed a more terrible menace in it, than the loudest intemperance of voice could swell to. But let the bold imitator beware, for without the look, and just elocution that waited on it, an attempt of the same nature may fall to nothing.

"But the dignity of this character appeared in Kynaston still more shining, in the private scene between the King, and Prince his son: there you saw majesty, in that sort of grief, which only majesty could feel! there the paternal concern, for the errors of the son, made the monarch more revered and dreaded: his reproaches, so just, yet so unmixed with anger, (and therefore the more piercing,) opening as it were the arms of nature, with a secret wish, that filial duty, and penitence awaked, might fall into them with grace and honour. In this affecting scene, I thought Kynaston showed his most masterly strokes of nature; expressing all the various motions of the heart, with the same force, dignity, and feeling, they are written; adding to the whole, that peculiar and becoming grace, which the best writer cannot inspire into any actor that is not born with it."

How inimitably is the varied excellence of Monfort depicted in the following speaking picture:

"Monfort, a younger man by twenty years, and at this time in his highest reputation, was an actor of a very different style: of person he was tall, well made, fair, and of an agreeable aspect: his voice clear, full, and melodious: in tragedy he was the most affecting lover within my memory. His addresses had a resistless recommendation from the very tone of his voice, which gave his words such a softness, that, as Dryden says,

> ——Like flakes of feather'd snow,
> They melted as they fell!

All this he particularly verified in that scene of Alexander, where the hero throws himself at the feet of Statira for pardon of his past infidelities. There we saw the great, the tender, the penitent, the despairing, the transported, and the amiable, in the highest perfection. In comedy, he gave the truest life to what we call the Fine Gentleman; his spirit shone the brighter for being polished with decency: in scenes of gayety, he never broke into the regard, that was due to the presence of equal or superior characters, though inferior actors played them; he filled the stage, not by elbowing, and crossing it before others, or disconcerting their action, but by surpassing them, in true and masterly touches of nature. He never laughed at his own jest, unless the point of his raillery upon another required it. He had a particular talent, in giving life to bons mots and repartees: the wit of the poet seemed always to come from him extempore, and sharpened into more wit from his brilliant manner of delivering it; he had himself a good share of it, or what is equal to it, so lively a pleasantness of humour, that when either of these fell into his hands upon the stage, he wantoned with them, to the highest delight of his auditors. The agreeable was so natural to him, that even in that dissolute character of the Rover he seemed to wash off the guilt from vice, and gave it charms and merit. For though it may be a reproach to the poet, to draw such characters, not only unpunished, but rewarded, the actor may still be allowed his due praise in his excellent performance. And this is a distinction which, when this comedy was acted at Whitehall, King William's Queen Mary was pleased to make in favour of Monfort, notwithstanding her disapprobation of the play.

"He had, besides all this, a variety in his genius which few capital actors have shown, or perhaps have thought it any addition to their merit to arrive at; he could entirely change himself; could at once throw off the man of sense, for the brisk, vain, rude, and lively coxcomb, the false, flashy pretender to wit, and the dupe of his own sufficiency: of this he gave a delightful instance in the character of Sparkish in Wycherly's Country Wife. In that of Sir Courtly Nice his excellence was still greater; there, his whole man, voice, mien, and gesture, was no longer Monfort, but another person. There, the insipid, soft civility, the elegant and formal mien, the drawling delicacy of voice, the stately flatness of his address, and the empty eminence of his attitudes, were so nicely observed and guarded by him, that had he not been an entire master of nature, had he not kept his judgment, as it were, a sentinel upon himself, not to admit the least likeness of what he used to be, to enter into any part of his performance, he could not possibly have so completely finished it."

Our author is even more felicitous in his description of the performers in low comedy and high farce. The following critic brings Nokes—the Liston of his age—so vividly before us, that we seem almost as well acquainted with him, as with his delicious successor.

"Nokes was an actor of quite a different genius from any I have ever read, heard of, or seen, since or before his time; and yet his general excellence may be comprehended in one article, viz., a plain and palpable simplicity of nature, which was so utterly his own, that he was often as unaccountably diverting in his common speech as on the stage. I saw him once, giving an account of some table-talk, to another actor behind the scenes, which a man of quality accidentally listening to, was so deceived by his manner, that he asked him, if that was a new play he was rehearsing? It seems almost amazing, that this simplicity, so easy to Nokes, should never be caught, by any one of his successors. Leigh and Underhil have been well copied, though not equalled by others. But not all the mimical skill of Estcourt (famed as he was for it) although he had often seen Nokes, could scarce give us an idea of him. After this, perhaps, it will be saying less of him, when I own, that though I have still the sound of every line he spoke, in my ear, (which used not to be thought a bad one,) yet I have often tried, by myself, but in vain, to reach the least distant likeness of the *vis comica* of Nokes. Though this may seem little to his praise, it may be negatively saying a good deal to it, because I have never seen any one actor, except himself, whom I could not at least so far imitate, as to give you a more than tolerable notion of his manner. But Nokes was so singular a species, and was so formed by nature for the stage, that I question if (beyond the trouble of getting words by heart) it ever cost him an hour's labour to arrive at that high reputation he had, and deserved.

"The characters he particularly shone in were Sir Martin Marr-all, Gomez, in the Spanish Friar, Sir Nicolas Cully, in Love in a Tub, Barnaby Brittle, in the Wanton Wife, Sir Davy Dunce, in the Soldier's Fortune, Sosia, in Amphytrion, &c. &c. &c. To tell you how he acted them, is beyond the reach of criticism: but, to tell you what effect his action had upon the spectator, is not impossible: this, then, is all you will expect from me, and from hence I must leave you to guess at him.

"He scarce ever made his first entrance in a play, but he was received with an involuntary applause, not of hands only, for those may be, and have often been partially prostituted, and bespoken; but by a general laughter, which the very sight of him provoked, and nature could not resist; yet the louder the laugh, the graver was his look upon it; and sure, the ridiculous solemnity of his features were enough to have set a whole bench of bishops into a titter, could he have been honoured (may it be no offence to suppose it) with such grave and right reverend auditors. In the ludicrous distresses, which, by the laws of comedy, Folly is often involved in; he sunk into such a mixture of piteous pusillanimity, and a consternation so ruefully ridiculous and inconsolable, that when he had shook you, to a fatigue of laughter, it became a moot point, whether you ought not to have pitied him. When he debated any matter by himself, he would shut up his mouth with a dumb studious pout, and roll his full eye into such a vacant amazement, such a palpable ignorance of what to think of it, that his silent perplexity (which would sometimes hold him several minutes) gave your imagination as full content as the most absurd thing he could say upon it. In the character of Sir Martin Marr-all, who is always committing blunders to the prejudice of his own interest, when he had brought himself to a dilemma in his affairs, by vainly proceeding upon his own head, and was afterwards afraid to look his governing servant and counsellor in the face; what a copious and distressful harangue have I seen him make with his looks (while the house has been in one continued roar, for several minutes) before he could prevail with his courage to speak a word to him! Then might you have, at once, read in his face *vexation*, that his own measures, which he had piqued himself upon, had failed;—*envy*, of his servant's superior wit;—*distress*, to retrieve the occasion he had lost;—*shame*, to confess his folly;—and yet a sullen desire, to be reconciled and better advised for the future! What tragedy ever showed us such a tumult of passions, rising at once in one bosom? or what buskined hero, standing under the load of them, could have more effectually moved his spectators, by the most pathetic speech, than poor miserable Nokes did, by this silent eloquence, and piteous plight of his features!

"His person was of the middle size, his voice clear and audible; his natural countenance, grave and sober; but the moment he spoke, the settled seriousness of his features was utterly discharged, and a dry, drolling, or laughing levity took such full possession of him, that I can only refer the idea of him to your imagination. In some of his low characters, that became it, he had a shuffling shamble in his gait, with so contented an ignorance in his aspect, and an awkward absurdity in his gesture, that had you not known him, you could not have believed, that naturally he could have had a grain of common sense. In a word, I am tempted to sum up the character of Nokes, as a comedian, in a parody of what Shakspeare's Mark Antony says of Brutus as a hero:

> 'His life was laughter, and the ludicrous
> So mixed in him. that Nature might stand up,
> And say to all the world—This was an actor.'"

The portrait of Underhil has not less the air of exact resemblance, though the subject is of less richness.

"Underhil was a correct and natural comedian; his particular excellence was in characters, that may be called still-life, I mean the stiff, the heavy, and the stupid: to these he gave the exactest and most expressive colours, and, in some of them, looked as if it were not in the power of human passions to alter a feature of him. In the solemn formality of Obadiah in the Committee, and in the boobily heaviness of Lolpoop, in the Squire of Alsatia, he seemed the immovable log he stood for! a countenance of wood could not be more fixed than his, when the blockhead of a character required it; his face was full and long; from his crown to the end of his nose was the shorter half of it, so that the disproportion of his lower features, when soberly composed, with an unwandering eye hanging over them, threw him into the most lumpish, moping mortal, that ever made beholders merry! not but, at other times, he could be awakened into spirit equally ridiculous. In the coarse, rustic humour of Justice Clodpate, in Epsome Wells, he was a delightful brute! and in the blunt vivacity of Sir Sampson, in Love for Love, he showed all that true perverse spirit, that is commonly seen in much wit and ill-nature. This character is one of those few so well written, with so much wit and humour, that an actor must be the grossest dunce that does not appear with an unusual life in it: but it will still show as great a proportion of skill, to come near Underhil in the acting it, which (not to undervalue those who came soon after him) I have not yet seen. He was particularly admired too, for the Gravedigger, in Hamlet. The author of the Tatler recommends him to the favour of the town, upon that play's being acted for his benefit wherein, after his age had some years obliged him to leave the stage, he came on again, for that day, to perform his old part; but, alas! so worn and disabled, as if himself was to have lain in the grave he was digging: when he could no more excite laughter, his infirmities were dismissed with pity: he died soon after a superannuated pensioner, in the list of those who were supported by the joint sharers, under the first patent granted to Sir Richard Steele."

We pass reluctantly over the account of Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Betterton, and others of less note, to insert the following exquisite picture of one who seems to have been the most exquisite of actresses:

"Mrs. Monfort, whose second marriage gave her the name of Verbruggen, was mistress of more variety of humour than I ever knew in any one actress. This variety, too, was attended with an equal vivacity, which made her excellent in characters extremely different. As she was naturally a pleasant mimic, she had the skill to make that talent useful on the stage, a talent which may be surprising in a conversation, and yet be lost when brought to the theatre, which was the case of Estcourt already mentioned: but where the elocution is round, distinct, voluble, and various, as Mrs. Monfort's was, the mimic, there, is a great assistant to the actor. Nothing, though ever so barren, if within the bounds of nature, could be flat in her hands. She gave many heightening touches to characters but coldly written, and often made an author vain of his work, that in itself had but little merit. She was so fond of humour, in what low part soever to be found, that she would make no scruple of defacing her fair form, to come heartily into it; for when she was eminent in several desirable characters of wit and humour, in higher life, she would be in as much fancy, when descending into the antiquated Abigail, or Fletcher, as when triumphing in all the airs and vain graces of a fine lady; a merit, that few actresses care for. In a play of D'Urfey's, now forgotten, called The Western Lass, which part she acted, she transformed her whole being, body, shape, voice, language, look, and features, into almost another animal; with a strong Devonshire dialect, a broad laughing voice, a poking head, round shoulders, an unconceiving eye, and the most bedizening, dowdy dress, that ever covered the untrained limbs of a Joan Trot. To have seen her here, you would have thought it impossible the same creature could ever have been recovered, to what was as easy to her, the gay, the lively, and the desirable. Nor was her humour limited to her sex; for, while her shape permitted, she was a more adroit pretty fellow than is usually seen upon the stage: her easy air, action, mien, and gesture, quite changed from the quoif to the cocked hat, and cavalier in fashion. People were so fond of seeing her a man, that when the part of Bays, in the Rehearsal, had, for some time, lain dormant, she was desired to take it up, which I have seen her act with all the true, coxcombly spirit and humour that the sufficiency of the character required.

"But what found most employment for her whole various excellence at once, was the part of Melantha, in Marriage-Alamode. Melantha is as finished an impertinent as ever fluttered in a drawing-room, and seems to contain the most complete system of female foppery that could possibly be crowded into the tortured form of a fine lady. Her language, dress, motion, manners, soul, and body, are in a continual hurry, to be something more than is necessary or commendable. And though I doubt it will be a vain labour, to offer you a just likeness of Mrs. Monfort's action, yet the fantastic impression is still so strong in my memory, that I cannot help saying something, though fantastically, about it. The first ridiculous airs that break from her, are upon a gallant, never seen before, who delivers her a letter from her father, recommending him to her good graces, as an honourable lover. Here, now, one would think she might naturally show a little of the sex's decent reserve, though never so slightly covered! No, sir: not a title of it; modesty is the virtue of a poor-souled country gentlewoman; she is too much a court lady, to be under so vulgar a confusion; she reads the letter, therefore, with a careless, dropping lip, and an erected brow, humming it hastily over, as if she were impatient to outgo her father's commands, by making a complete conquest of him at once; and that the letter might not embarrass her attack, crack! she crumbles it at once, into her palm, and pours upon him her whole artillery of airs, eyes, and motion; down goes her dainty, diving body, to the ground, as if she were sinking under the conscious load of her own attractions; then launches into a flood of fine language and compliment, still playing her chest forward in fifty falls and risings, like a swan upon waving water; and, to complete her impertinence, she is so rapidly fond of her own wit, that she will not give her lover leave to praise it; silent assenting bows, and vain endeavours to speak, are all the share of the conversation he is admitted to, which, at last, he is relieved from, by her engagement to half a score visits, which she swims from him to make, with a promise to return in a twinkling."

In this work, also, the reader may become acquainted, on familiar terms, with Wilkes and Dogget, and Booth—fall in love with Mrs. Bracegirdle, as half the town did in days of yore—and sit amidst applauding whigs and tories on the first representation of *Cato*. He may follow the actors from the gorgeous scene of their exploits to their private enjoyments, share in their jealousies, laugh with them at their own ludicrous distresses, and join in their happy social hours. Yet with all our admiration for the theatrical artists, who yet live in *Cibber's Apology*, we rejoice to believe that their high and joyous art is not declining. Kemble, indeed, and Mrs. Siddons, have forsaken that stateliest region of tragedy which they first opened to our gaze. But the latter could not be regarded as belonging to any age; her path was lonely as it was exalted, and she appeared, not as highest of a class which existed before her, but as a being of another order, destined "to leave the world no copy," but to enrich its imaginations for ever. Yet have we, in the youngest of the Kemble line, at once an artist of antique grace in comedy, and a tragedian of look the most chivalrous and heroic—of "form and moving most express and admirable"—of enthusiasm to give vivid expression to the highest and the most honourable of human emotions.——Still, in Macready, can we boast of one, whose rich and noble voice is adapted to all the most exquisite varieties of tenderness and passion—one, whose genius leads him to imbody characters the most imaginative and romantic—and who throws over his grandest pictures tints so mellow and so nicely blended, that, with all their inimitable variety, they sink in perfect harmony into the soul.——Still, in Kean, have we a performer of intensity never equalled—of pathos the sweetest and most profound—whose bursts of passion almost transport us into another order of being, and whose flashes of genius cast a new light on the darkest caverns of the soul. If we have few names to boast in elegant comedy, we enjoy a crowd of the richest and most original humourists, with Munden—that actor of a myriad unforgotten faces—at their head. But our theme has enticed us beyond our proper domain of the past; and we must retire. Let us hope for some Cibber, to catch the graces of our living actors before they perish, that our successors may fix on them their retrospective eyes unblamed, and enrich with a review of their merits some number of our work, which will appear, in due course, in the twenty-second century!

REVIEW OF JOHN DENNIS'S WORKS.

[Retrospective Review, No. 2.]

John Dennis, the terror or the scorn of that age, which is sometimes honoured with the title of Augustan, has attained a lasting notoriety, to which the reviewers of our times can scarcely aspire. His name is immortalized in the Dunciad; his best essay is preserved in Johnson's Lives of the Poets; and his works yet keep their state in two substantial volumes, which are now before us. But the interest of the most poignant abuse and the severest criticism quickly perishes. We contemplate the sarcasms and the invectives which once stung into rage the irritable generation of poets, with as cold a curiosity as we look on the rusty javelins or stuffed reptiles in the glass cases of the curious. The works of Dennis will, however, assist us in forming a judgment of the criticism of his age, as compared with that of our own, and will afford us an opportunity of investigating the influences of that popular art on literature and on manners.

But we must not forget, that Mr. Dennis laid claims to public esteem, not only as a critic, but as a wit, a politician, and a poet. In the first and the last of these characters, he can receive but little praise. His attempts at gayety and humour are weighty and awkward, almost without example. His poetry can only be described by negatives; it is not inharmonious, nor irregular, nor often turgid—for the author, too nice to sink into the mean, and too timid to rise into the bombastic, dwells in elaborate "decencies for ever." The climax of his admiration for Queen Mary—"Mankind extols the king—the king admires the queen"—will give a fair specimen of his architectural eulogies. He is entitled to more respect as an honest patriot. He was, indeed, a true-hearted Englishman—with the legititmate prejudices of his country—warmly attached to the principles of the revolution, detesting the French, abominating the Italian opera, and deprecating as heartily the triumph of the Pretender, as the success of a rival's tragedy. His political treatises, though not very elegantly finished, are made of sturdy materials. He appears, from some passages in his letters, to have cherished a genuine love of nature, and to have turned, with eager delight, to deep and quiet solitudes, for refreshment from the feverish excitements, the vexatious defeats, and the barren triumphs of his critical career. He admired Shakspeare, after the fashion of his age, as a wild, irregular genius, who would have been inconceivably greater, had he known and copied the ancients. The following is a part of his general criticism on this subject, and a fair specimen of his best style:

"Shakspeare was one of the greatest geniuses that the world ever saw, for the tragic stage. Though he lay under greater disadvantages than any of his successors, yet had he greater and more genuine beauties than the best and greatest of them. And what makes the brightest glory of his character, those beauties were entirely his own, and owing to the force of his own nature; whereas, his faults were owing to his education, and to the age he lived in. One may say of him, as they did of Homer, that he had none to imitate, and is himself inimitable. His imaginations were often as just as they were bold and strong. He had a natural discretion which never could have been taught him, and his judgment was strong and penetrating. He seems to have wanted nothing but time and leisure for thought, to have found out those rules of which he appears so ignorant. His characters are always drawn justly, exactly, graphically, except where he failed by not knowing history or the poetical art. He had, for the most part, more fairly distinguished them than any of his successors have done, who have falsified them, or confounded them, by making love the predominant quality in all. He had so fine a talent for touching the passions, and they are so lively in him, and so truly in nature, that they often touch us more, without their due preparations, than those of other tragic poets, who have all the beauty of design and all the advantage of incidents. His master passion was terror, which he has often moved so powerfully and so wonderfully, that we may justly conclude, that if he had had the advantage of art and learning, he would have surpassed the very best and strongest of the ancients. His paintings are often so beautiful and so lively, so graceful and so powerful, especially where he uses them in order to move terror, that there is nothing, perhaps, more accomplished in our English poetry. His sentiments for the most part, in his best tragedies, are noble, generous, easy, and natural, and adapted to the persons who use them. His expression is, in many places, good and pure, after a hundred years; simple though elevated, graceful though bold, easy though strong. He seems to have been the very original of our English tragical harmony; that is, the harmony of blank verse, diversified often by dissyllable and trissyllable terminations. For that diversity distinguishes it from heroic harmony, and, bringing it nearer to common use, makes it more proper to gain attention, and more fit for action and dialogue. Such verse we make when we are writing prose; we make such verse in common conversation.

"If Shakspeare had these great qualities by nature, what would he not have been, if he had joined to so happy a genius learning and the poetical art. For want of the latter, our author has sometimes made gross mistakes in the characters which he has drawn from history, against the equality and conveniency of manners of his dramatical persons. Witness Menenius in the following tragedy, whom he has made an arrant buffoon, which is a great absurdity. For he might as well have imagined a grave majestic Jack Pudding as a buffoon in a Roman senator. Aufidius, the general of the Volscians, is shown a base and a profligate villain. He has offended against the equality of the manners even in the hero himself. For Coriolanus, who in the first part of the tragedy is shown so open, so frank, so violent, and so magnanimous, is represented in the latter part by Aufidius, which is contradicted by no one, a flattering, fawning, cringing, insinuating traitor."

Mr. Dennis proceeds very generously to apologize for Shakspeare's faults, by observing that he had neither friends to consult, nor time to make corrections. He, also, attributes his lines "utterly void of celestial fire," and passages "harsh and unmusical," to the want of leisure to wait for felicitous hours and moments of choicest inspiration. To remedy these defects—to mend the harmony and to put life into the dulness of Shakspeare—Mr. Dennis has assayed, and brought his own genius to the alteration of Coriolanus for the stage, under the lofty title of the "Invader of his Country, or the Fatal Resentment." In the catastrophe, Coriolanus kills Aufidius, and is himself afterwards slain, to satisfy the requisitions of poetical justice; which, to Mr. Dennis's great distress, Shakspeare so often violates. It is quite amusing to observe, with how perverted an ingenuity all the gaps in Shakspeare's verses are filled up, the irregularities smoothed away, and the colloquial expressions changed for stately phrases. Thus, for example, the noble wish of Coriolanus on entering the forum—

"The honoured gods
Keep Rome in safety. and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among us!
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war"—

is thus elegantly translated into classical language:

"The great and tutelary gods of Rome
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men: plant love among you:
Adorn our temples with the pomp of peace,
And, from our streets drive horrid war away."

The conclusion of the hero's last speech on leaving Rome—

"Thus I turn my back: there is a world elsewhere."

is elevated into the following heroic lines:

"For me, thus, thus, I turn my back upon you,
And make a better world where'er I go."

His fond expression of constancy to his wife—

"That kiss
I carried from thee, *dear;* and my true lip
Hath virgined it e'er since,"—

is thus refined:

"That kiss
I carried from *my love*, and my true lip
Hath ever since preserved it like a virgin."

The icicle which was wont to "hang on Dian's temple," here more gracefully "hangs upon the temple of Diana." The burst of mingled pride, and triumph of Coriolanus, when taunted with the word "boy," is here exalted to tragic dignity. Our readers have, doubtless, ignorantly admired the original.

Boy! False hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That like an eagle in a dove cote, I
"Fluttered your Volsces in Corioli.
Alone I did it—Boy.

The following is the improved version:

"This boy, that like an eagle in a dove court,
Flutter'd a thousand Volsces in Corioli,
And did it without second or acquittance,
Thus sends their mighty chief to mourn in hell!"

Who does not now appreciate the sad lot of Shakspeare—so feelingly bewailed by Mr. Dennis—that he had not a critic, of the age of King William, by his side, to refine his style and elevate his conceptions!

It is edifying to observe, how the canons of Mr. Dennis's criticism, which he regarded as the imperishable laws of genius, are now either exploded, or considered as matters of subordinate importance, wholly unaffecting the inward soul of poetry. No one now regards the merits of an Epic poem, as decided by the subservience of the fable and the action to the moral—by the presence or the absence of an allegory—by the fortunate or unfortunate fate of the hero—or by any other rules of artificial decorum, which the critics of former times thought fit to inculcate. We learn from their essays, whether the works which they examine are constructed, in externals, according to certain fantastic rules; but, whether they are frigid or impassioned, harmonious or prosaic, filled with glorious imaginations, or replete with low common-places: whether, in short, they are works of genius or of mere toil—are questions entirely beneath their concern. The critic on the tragedy of Cato, ingenious and just as it is, omits one material objection to that celebrated piece—that it is good for nothing, and would be so if all the faults selected for censure could be, in an instant, corrected. There is a French essay on Telemachus, framed on the same superficial principles of criticism, which, after a minute examination of the moral, fable, characters, allegory, and other like requisites of excellence, triumphantly proves its claim to be ranked with, if not above, the great poems of Homer and of Virgil. Mr. Dennis seems, in general, to have applied the rules of criticism, extant in his day, to the compositions on which he passed judgment; but there was one position respecting which his contemporaries were not agreed, and on which he combated with the spirit of a martyr. This disputed point, the necessity of observing poetical justice in works of fiction, we shall briefly examine, because we think that it involves one of those mistakes in humanity, which it is always desirable to expose. But first we must, in fairness, lay one of our author's many arguments, on this subject, before our readers.

"The principal character of an epic poem must be either morally good or morally vicious; if he is morally good, the making him end unfortunately will destroy all poetical justice, and, consequently, all instruction: such a poem can have no moral, and, consequently, no fable, no just and regular poetical action, but must be a vain fiction and an empty amusement. Oh, but there is a retribution in futurity! But I thought that the reader of an epic poem was to owe his instruction to the poet, and not to himself: well then, the poet may tell him so at the latter end of his poem: ay, would to God I could see such a latter end of an epic poem, where the poet should tell the reader, that he has cut an honest man's throat, only that he may have an opportunity to send him to heaven: and that, though this would be but an indifferent plea upon an indictment for murder at the Old Bailey, yet that he hopes the good-natured reader will have compassion on him, as the gods have on his hero. But raillery apart, sir, what occasion is there for having recourse to an epic poet to tell ourselves by the bye, and by the occasional reflection, that there will be a retribution in futurity, when the Christian has this in his heart constantly and directly, and the Atheist and Freethinker will make no such reflection? Tell me truly, sir, would not such a poet appear to you or me, not to have sufficiently considered what a poetical moral is? And should not you or I, sir, be obliged, in order to make him comprehend the nature of it, to lay before him that universal moral, which is the foundation of all morals, both epic and dramatic, and is inclusive of them all, and that is, That he who does good, and perseveres in it, shall always be rewarded; and he who does ill, and perseveres in it, shall always be punished! Should we not desire him to observe, that the foresaid reward must always attend and crown good actions, not sometimes only, for then it would follow, that sometimes a perseverance in good actions has no reward, which would take away all poetical instruction, and, indeed, every sort of moral instruction, resolving Providence into chance or fate. Should we not, sir, farther put him in mind, that since whoever perseveres in good actions, is sure to be rewarded at the last, it follows, that a poet does not assert by his moral, that he is always sure to be rewarded in this world, because that would be false, as you have very justly observed, p. 60; and, therefore, never can be the moral of an epic poem, because what is false may delude, but only truth can instruct. Should we not let him know, sir, that this universal moral only teaches us, that whoever perseveres in good actions, shall be always sure to be rewarded either here or hereafter; and that the truth of this moral is proved by the poet, by making the principal character of his poem, like all the rest of his characters, and like the poetical action, at the bottom, universal and allegorical, even after distinguishing it by a particular name, by making this principal character, at the bottom, a mere political phantom of a very short duration, through the whole extent of which duration we can see at once, which continues no longer than the reading of the poem, and that being over, the phantom is to us nothing, so that unless our sense is satisfied of the reward that is given to this poetical phantom, whose whole duration we see through from the very beginning to the end; instead of a wholesome moral, there would be a pernicious instruction, viz: That a man may persevere in good actions, and not be rewarded for it through the whole extent of his duration, that is, neither in this world nor in the world to come."

It may be sufficient to answer to all this—and to much more of the same kind which our author has adduced—that little good can be attained by representations which are perpetually at variance with our ordinary perceptions. The poet may represent humanity as mightier and fairer than it appears to a common observer. In the mirror which he "holds up to nature," the forms of might and of beauty may look more august, more lovely, or more harmonious, than they appear, in the "light of common day," to eyes which are ungifted with poetic vision. But if the world of imagination is directly opposed to that of reality, it will become a cold abstraction, a baseless dream, a splendid mockery. We shall strive in vain to make men sympathize with beings of a sphere purely ideal, where might shall be always right, and virtue its own present as well as exceeding great reward. Happily, the exhibition is as needless for any moral purposes, as it would be inadequate to attain them. Though the poet cannot make us witnesses of the future recompense of that virtue, which here struggles and suffers, he can cause us to feel, in the midst of its very struggles and sufferings, that it is eternal. He makes the principle of immortality manifest in the meek submission, in the deadly wrestle with fate, and even in the mortal agonies of his noblest characters. What, in true dignity, does virtue lose by the pangs which its clay tenement endures, if we are made conscious of its high prerogatives, though we do not actually behold the immunities which shall ultimately be its portion? Hereafter it *may* be rewarded; but *now* it is triumphant. We require no dull epilogue to tell us, that it shall be crowned in another and happier state of being; for our souls gush with admiration and sympathy with it, amidst its sorrows. We love it, and burn to imitate it, for its own loveliness, not for its gains. Surely it is a higher aim of the poet to awaken this emotion—to inspire us with the awe of goodness, amidst its deepest external debasements, and to make us almost desire to share in them, than to invite us to partake in her rewards, and to win us by a calculating sympathy. The hovel or the dungeon does not, in the pictures of a genuine poet, give the colouring to the soul which inhabits it, but receives from its majesty a consecration beyond that of temples, and a dignity statelier than that of palaces. For it is his high prerogative to exhibit the spiritual part of man triumphant over that about him, which is mortal—to show, in his far-reaching hope, his moveless constancy, his deep and disinterested affections, that there is a spirit within him, which death cannot destroy. Low, indeed, is the morality which aspires to affect men by nothing beyond the poor and childish lesson, that to be virtuous is to be happy. Virtue is no dependant on earthly expediencies for its excellence. It has a beauty to be loved, as vice has a deformity to be abhorred, which are unaffected by the consequences experienced by their votaries. Do we admire the triumph of vice, and scoff at goodness, when we think on the divine Clarissa, violated, imprisoned, heart-broken, dying? Must Parson Adams receive a mitre, to assure us that we should love him? Our best feelings and highest aspirations are not yet of so mercantile a cast as those who contend for "poetical justice" would imagine. The mere result, in respect of our sympathies, is as nothing. The only real violation of poetical justice is in the violation of nature in the clothing. When, for example, a wretch, whose trade is murder, is represented as cherishing the purest and the deepest love for an innocent being—when chivalrous delicacy or sentiment is conferred on a pirate, tainted with a thousand crimes—the effect is immoral, whatever doom may, at last, await him. If the barriers of virtue and of evil are melted down by the current of spurious sympathy, there is no catastrophe which can remove the mischief; and while these are preserved in our feelings, there is none which can truly harm us.

The critics of the age of Dennis held a middle course between their predecessors of old time, and their living successors. The men who first exercised the art of criticism, imbued with personal veneration for the loftiest works of genius, sought to deduce rules from them, which future poets should observe. They did not assume the right of passing individual judgments on their contemporaries—nor did they aim at deciding even abstract questions of taste on their own personal authority—but attempted, by fixing the laws of composition, to mark out the legitimate channels in which the streams of thought, passion, and sentiment, should be bounded through all ages. Their dogmas, therefore, whether they contained more or less of truth, carried with them no extrinsic weight, were influenced by no personal feelings, excited no personal animosities, but simply appealed, like poetry itself, to those minds which alone could give them sanction. In the first critical days of England—those of the Rymers and the Dennises—the professors of the art began to regard themselves as judges, not merely of the principles of poetry, but of their application by living authors. Then commenced the arrogance on the side of the supervisors, and the impatience and resentment on that of their subjects, which contemporary criticism necessarily inspires. The worst passions of man are brought into exercise in reference to those pure and ennobling themes, which should be sacred from all low contentions of "the ignorant present time." But the battle was, at least, fair and open. The critic still appealed to principles, however fallacious or imperfect, which all the world might examine. His decrees had no weight, independent of his reasons, nor was his name, or his want of one, esteemed of magical virtue. He attacked the poets on equal terms—sometimes, indeed, with derision and personal slander—but always as a foe to subdue, not as a judge to pass sentence on them. Criticism, in our own times, has first assumed the air of "sovereign sway and masterdom" over the regions of fantasy. Its professors enforce, not established laws, contend no longer for principles, attack poets no more with chivalrous zeal, as violating the cause of poetic morals, or sinning against the regularities of their art. They pronounce the works, of which they take cognisance, to be good or bad—often without professing to give any reason for their decision—or referring to any standard, more fixed or definite than their own taste, partiality, or prejudice. And the public, without any knowledge of their fitness for their office—without even knowing their names—receive them as the censors of literature, the privileged inspectors of genius! This strange supremacy of criticism, in our own age, gives interest to the investigation of the claims which the art itself possesses to the respect and gratitude of the people. If it is, on the whole, beneficial to the world, it must either be essential to the awakening of genius—or necessary to direct its exertions—or useful in repressing abortive and mistaken efforts—or conducive to the keeping alive and fitly guiding admiration to the good and great. On each of these grounds, we shall now very briefly examine its value.

1. It is evident, that the art of criticism is not requisite to the development of genius, because, in the golden ages of poetry it has had no portion. Its professors have never even constructed the scaffolding to aid the erection of the cloud-capped towers and solemn temples of the bard. By his facile magic he has called them into existence, like the palace of Aladdin, as complete in the minutest graces of finishing as noble in design. Long before the art of criticism was known in Greece, her rhapsodists had attained the highest excellencies of poetry. No fear of a critic's scorn, no desire of a critic's praise, influenced these consecrated wanderers. Nature alone was their model, their inspirer, and their guide. From her did they drink in the feeling, not only of permanence and of grandeur, but of aërial grace and roseate beauty. The rocks and hills gave them the visible images of lasting might—the golden clouds of even, "sailing on the bosom of the air," sent a feeling of evanescent loveliness into their souls—and the delicate branchings of the grove, reflected in the calm waters, imbued them with a perception of elegance beyond the reach of art. No pampered audiences thought themselves entitled to judge them: to analyze their powers; to descant on their imperfections; to lament their failures; or to eulogize their sublimities, as those who had authority to praise. Their hearers dwelt on their accents with rapturous wonder, as nature's living oracles. They wandered through the everywhere communicating joy, and everywhere receiving reverence—exciting in youth its first tearful ecstasy, and kindling fresh enthusiasm amidst the withered affections of age. They were revered as the inspired chroniclers of heroic deeds—the inspirers of national glory and virtue—the depositories of the mysteries and the philosophic wisdom of times which even then were old. They trusted not to paper or the press for the preservation of their fame. They were contented, that each tree beneath which they had poured forth their effusions, should be loved for their sake—that the forked promontory should bear witness of them—and the "brave o'erhanging firmament, fretted with golden fire," tell of those who had first awakened within the soul a sense of its glories. Their works were treasured up nowhere but in the soul—spread abroad only by the enthusiasm of kindred reciters—and transmitted to the children of other generations, while they listened with serious faces to the wondrous tales of their fathers. Yet these poems, so produced, so received, so preserved, were not only instinct with heavenly fire, but regular as the elaborate efforts of the most polished ages. In these products of an era of barbarism, have future bards not only found an exhaustless treasury of golden imaginations, but critics have discovered all those principles of order which they would establish as unalterable laws. The very instances of error and haste in their authors have been converted into figures of rhetoric, by those men, who represent nature herself as irregular and feeble, and a minute attention to rules as essential to the perfection of genius.

As criticism had no share in producing the Homeric poems, so also did it contribute nothing to the perfection of the Greek tragedies. For those works—the most complete and highly finished, if not the most profound, of all human creations—there was no more *previous warrant*, than for the wildest dream of fantasy. No critic fashioned the moulds in which those exquisite groups were cast, or inspired them with Promethean life. They were struck off in the heat of inspiration—the offspring of moments teeming for immortality—though the slightest limb of each of the figures is finished as though it had been the labour of a life. These eternal works were complete—the spirit which inspired their authors was extinct—when Aristotle began to criticise. The development of the art of poetry, by that great philosopher, wholly failed to inspire any bard, whose productions might break the descent from the mighty relics of the preceding years. After him, his disciples amused themselves in refining on his laws—in cold disputations and profitless scrutinies. The soil, late so fertile with the stateliest productions of nature, was overgrown with a low and creeping underwood, which, if any delicate flower struggled into day, oppressed and concealed it from view beneath its briary and tangled thickets.

2. The instances already given refute not only the notion that criticism is requisite to prepare the way for genius, but also the opinion that it is necessary to give it a right direction and a perfect form. True imagination is in itself "all compact." The term irregular, as absolutely applied to genius, is absurd, and applied relatively, it means nothing but that it is original in its career. There is properly no such thing as irregular genius. A man endowed with "the vision and the faculty divine," may choose modes of composition unsuited to the most appropriate display of his powers;—his images may not be disposed in the happiest arrangement, or may be clustered around subjects, in themselves, dreary or mean, but these fantasies must be in themselves harmonious, or they would not be beauteous, would not be imaginations. Genius is a law unto itself. Its germs have, within them, not only the principles of beauty, but the very form which the flower in its maturity must expand. As a wavy gleam of fire rises from the spark, in its own exquisite shape, so does imagination send forth its glories, perfect by the felicitous necessity of their nature, exquisite in form by the same impulse which gives them brightness and fervour. But how can the critic, in reality, acquire any jurisdiction over the genuine poet? Where are the lines by which he can fathom the depths of the soul; where the instrument by which he can take the altitude of "the highest heaven of invention?" How can he judge of thoughts which penetrate the mysteries of humanity, of fancies which "in the colours of the rainbow live, and play in the plighted clouds," of anticipations and foretastes by which the bard already "breathes in worlds, to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil?" Can he measure a sunbeam, or constrain a cloud, or count the steps of the bounding stag of the forest, to judge whether they are grace

ful? Has he power even to define those gigantic shadows reflected on the pure mirror of the poet's imagination, from the eternal things which mortal eyes cannot discern? At best, he can but reason from what has been to what should be; and what can be more absurd than this course in reference to poetic invention? A critic can understand no rules of criticism except what existing poetry has taught him. There was no more reason, after the production of the Iliad, to contend that future poems should in certain points resemble it, than there was before the existence of that poem to lay down rules which would prevent its being what it is. There was antecedently no more probability that the powers of man, harmoniously exerted, could produce the tale of Troy divine, than that, after it, the same powers would not produce other works equally marvellous and equally perfect, yet wholly different in their colouring and form. The reasons which would prevent men from doing any thing unlike it, would also have prevented its creation, for it was doubtless unlike all previous inventions. Criticism can never be prospective, until the resources of man and nature are exhausted. Each new world of imagination revolves on itself, in an orbit of its own. Its beauties create the taste which shall relish them, and the very critics which shall extol their proportions. The first admirers of Homer had no conception that the Greek tragedies would start into life and become lasting as their idol. Those who lived after the times when these were perfected, asserted that no dramas could be worthy of praise, which were not fashioned according to their models and composed of similar materials. But, after a long interval, came Shakspeare—at first, indeed, considered by many as barbarous and strange—who, when his real merits are perceived, is felt to be, at the least, equal to his Greek predecessors, though violating every rule drawn from their works. Even in our short remembrance, we can trace the complete abolition of popular rules of criticism, by the new and unexpected combinations of genius. A few years ago, it was a maxim gravely asserted by Reviews, Treatises, and Magazines, that no interesting fiction could effectively be grafted on history. But "mark how a plain tale" by the author of Waverley "puts down" the canon for ever! In fact, unless with more than angel's ken a critic could gaze on all the yet unpossessed regions of imagination, it is impossible that he should limit his discoveries which yet await the bard. He may perceive, indeed, how poets of old have by their magic divided the clouds which bound man's ordinary vision, and may scan the regions which they have thus opened to our gaze. But how can he thus anticipate what future bards may reveal—direct the proportions, the colours and the forms, of the realities which they shall unveil—fix boundaries to regions of beauty yet unknown; determine the height of their glory-stricken hills; settle the course of their mighty waters; or regulate the visionary shapes of superhuman grace, which shall gleam in the utmost distance of their far perspectives?

3. But it may be urged, that criticism is useful in putting down the pretensions of those who aspire, without just claim, to the honours of genius. This, indeed, in so far as it is unfavourable, is its chief object in modern times. The most celebrated of literary tribunals takes as the motto of its decrees, "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur;" assuming that to publish a dull book is a *crime*, which the public good requires should be exposed, whatever laceration of the inmost soul may be inflicted on the offender in the process. This damnatory principle is still farther avowed in the following dogma of this august body, which deserves to be particularly quoted as an explicit declaration of the spirit of modern criticism:

"There is nothing of which nature has been more bountiful than poets. They swarm like the spawn of the cod-fish, with a vicious fecundity that invites and requires destruction To publish verses is become a sort of evidence that a man wants sense; which is repelled, not by writing good verses, but by writing excellent verses;—by doing what Lord Byron has done;—by displaying talents great enough to overcome the disgust which proceeds from satiety, and showing that all things may become new under the reviving touch of genius." —*Ed. Rev., No.* 43, *p.* 68.

It appears to us, that the crime and the evil denounced in this pregnant sentence are entirely visionary and fantastic. There is no great danger, that works without talent should usurp the admiration of the world. Splendid error may mislead; vice linked to a radiant angel, by perverted genius, may seduce; and the union of high energy with depravity of soul may teach us to respect where we ought to shudder. But men will not easily be dazzled by insipidity, enchanted by discord, or awed by weakness. The mean and base, even if left to themselves unmolested, will scarcely grow immortal by the neglect of the magnanimous and the wise. He who cautions the public against the admiration of feeble productions, almost equals the wisdom of a sage, who should passionately implore a youth not imprudently to set his heart on ugliness and age. And surely our nerves are not grown so finely tremulous, that we require guardians who may providently shield us from glancing on a work which may prove unworthy of perusal. It is one high privilege of our earthly lot, that the best pleasures of humanity are not balanced by any painful sensations arising from their contraries. We drink in joy too deep for expression, when we penetrate the vast solitudes of nature, and gaze on her rocky fortresses, her eternal hills, her regions "consecrate to eldest time." But we feel no answering agony while we traverse level and barren plains; especially if we can leave them at pleasure.—Thus, while we experience a thrilling delight, in thinking on the divinest imaginations of the poet, we are not plunged, by the dullest author, into the depths of sorrow. At all events, we can throw down the book at once; and we must surely be very fastidious if we do not regard the benefit conferred on printers and publishers, and the gratification of the author's innocent and genial vanity, as amply compensating the slight labour which we have taken in vain.

But, perhaps, it is the good of the aspirants themselves, rather than of their readers, which the critic professes to design. Here, also, we think he is mistaken. The men of our generation are not too prone to leave their quest after the substantial blessings of the world, in order to pursue those which are aërial and shadowy. The very error of the mind, which takes the love for the power of poetry, is more goodly than common wisdom. But there are certain seasons, we believe, in life—some few golden moments at least—in which all men have really perceived, and felt, and enjoyed, as poets. Who remembers not an hour of serious ecstasy, when, perhaps, as he lay beneath some old tree and gazed on the setting sun, earth seemed a visionary thing, the glories of immortality were half revealed, and the first notes a universal harmony whispered to his soul?—some moment, when he seemed almost to realize the eternal, and could have been well contented to yield up his mortal being?—some little space, populous of high thoughts and disinterested resolves—some touch upon that "line of limitless desires," along which he shall live in a purer sphere? —And if that taste of joy is not to be renewed on earth, the soul will not suffer by an attempt to prolong its memory. It is a mistake, to suppose that young beginners in poetry are always prompted by a mere love of worldly fame. The sense of beauty and the love of the ideal, if they do not draw all the faculties into their likeness, still impart to the soul something of their rich and unearthly colouring. Young fantasy spreads its golden films, slender though they be, through the varied tenour of existence. Imagination, nurtured in the opening of life, though it be not developed in poetic excellence, will strengthen the manly virtue, give a noble cast to the thoughts, and a generous course to the sympathies. It will assist to crush self-love in its first risings, to mellow and soften the heart, and prepare it for its glorious destiny. Even if these consequences did not follow, surely the most exquisite feelings of young hope are not worthy of scorn. They may truly be worth years of toil, of riches, and of honour. Who would crush them at a venture—short and uncertain as life is—and cold and dreary as are often its most brilliant successes? What, indeed, can this world offer to compare with the earliest poetic dreams, which our modern critics think it sport or virtue to destroy?

"Such views the youthful bard allure,
  As, mindless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
  'Till peace go with him to the tomb.

And let him nurse his fond deceit,
  And what if he must die in sorrow;—
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
  Though care and grief should come to-morrow?"

But, supposing for a moment that it were really desirable to put down all authors who do not rise into excellence, at any expense of personal feeling, we must not forget the risk which such a process involves, of crushing undeveloped genius. There are many causes which may prevent minds, gifted with the richest faculties, from exerting them at the first with success. The very number of images, crowding on the mirror of the soul, may for a while darken its surface, and give the idea of inextricable confusion. The young poet's holiest thoughts must often appear to him too sacred to be fully developed to the world. His soul will half shrink at first from the disclosure of its solemn immunities and strange joys. He will thus become timid and irresolute —tell but a slight part of that which he feels— and this broken and disjointed communication will appear senseless or feeble. The more deep and original his thoughts—the more dazzling his glimpses into the inmost sanctuaries of nature,—the more difficult will be the task of imbodying these in words, so as to make them palpable to ordinary conceptions. He will be constantly in danger, too, in the fervour of his spirit, of mistaking things which in his mind are connected with strains of delicious musing, for objects, in themselves, stately or sacred. The seeming commonplace, which we despise, may be to him the index to pure thoughts and far-reaching desires. In that which to the careless eye may seem but a little humble spring—pure, perhaps, and sparkling, but scarce worthy of a glance— the more attentive observer may perceive a depth which he cannot fathom, and discover that the seeming fount is really the breaking forth of a noble river, winding its consecrated way beneath the soil, which, as it runs, will soon bare its bosom to the heavens, and glide in a cool and fertilizing majesty. And is there not some danger that souls, whose powers of expression are inadequate to make manifest their inward wealth, should be sealed for ever by the hasty sentences of criticism? The name of Lord Byron is rather unfortunately introduced by the celebrated journal which we have quoted, into its general denunciation against youthful poets. Surely the critics must for the moment have forgotten, that at the outset of the career of that bard, to whose example they now refer, as most illustriously opposed to the mediocrity which they condemn, they themselves poured contempt on his endeavours! Do they now wish that he had taken their counsel? Are they willing to run the hazard, for the sake of putting down a thousand pretenders a few months before their time, of crushing another power such as they esteem his own? Their very excuse—that, at the time, his verses were all which they had adjudged them—is the very proof of the impolicy of such censures. If the object of their scorn has, in this instance, risen above it, how do we know that more delicate minds have not sunk beneath it? Besides, although Lord Byron was not repelled, but rather excited by their judgment, he seems to have sustained from it scarcely less injury. If it stung him into energy, it left its poison in his soul. It first instigated his spleen;—taught him that spirit of scorn which debases the noblest faculties—and impelled him, in his rage, to attack those who had done him no wrong, to scoff at the sanctities of humanity, and to pretend to hate or deride his species!

And, even if genius is too deep to be suppressed, or too celestial to be perverted, is it nothing that the soul of its possessor should be wrung with agony? For a while, criticism may throw back poets whom it cannot annihilate, and make them pause in their course of glory and of joy, "confounded though immortal." Who can estimate those pangs, which on the "purest spirits" are thus made to prey

"as on entrails, joint, and limb,
With answerable pains but more intense?"

The heart of a young poet is one of the most sacred things on earth. How nicely strung are its fibres—how keen its sensibilities—how shrinking the timidity with which it puts forth its gentle conceptions! And shall such a heart receive rude usage from a world which it only desires to improve and to gladden? Shall its nerves be stretched on the rack, or its apprehensions turned into the instruments of its torture? All this, and more, has been done towards men of whom "this world was not worthy." Cowper, who, first of modern poets, restored to the general heart the feeling of healthful nature—whose soul was without one particle of malice or of guile—whose susceptible and timorous spirit shrunk tremblingly from the touch of this rough world—was chilled, tortured, and almost maddened, by some nameless critic's scorn. Kirke White—the delicate beauties of whose mind were destined scarcely to unfold themselves on earth—in the beginning of his short career, was cut to the heart by the cold mockery of a stranger. A few sentences, penned, perhaps, in mere carelessness, almost nipped the young blossoms of his genius "like an untimely frost;" palsied for awhile all his faculties—imbittered his little span of life—haunted him almost to the verge of his grave, and heightened his dying agonies! Would the annihilation of all the dulness in the world compensate for one moment's anguish inflicted on hearts like these?

We have been all this time considering not the possible abuses, but the necessary tendencies, of contemporary criticism. All the evils we have pointed out may arise, though no sinister design pervert the Reviewer's judgment—though no prejudice, even unconsciously, warp him—and, even, though he may decide fairly "from the evidence before him." But it is impossible that this favourable supposition should be often realized in an age like ours. Temper, politics, religion, the interests of rival poets, or rival publishers—a thousand influences, sometimes recognised, and sometimes only felt—decide the sentence on imaginations the most divine. The very trade of the critic himself—the necessity of his being witty, or brilliant, or sarcastic, for his own sake—is sufficient to disqualify him as a judge. Sad thought!—that the most sensitive, and gentle, and profound of human beings, should be dependent on casual caprice, on the passions of a bookseller, or on the necessities of a period!

4. It may be perceived, from what we have already written, that we do not esteem criticism as a guide more than as a censor. The general effect on the public mind is, we fear, to dissipate and weaken. It spoils the freshest charms even of the poetry which it praises. It destroys all reverence for great poets, by making the world think of them as a species of culprits, who are to plead their genius as an excuse for their intrusion. Time has been when the poet himself—instead of submitting his works to the public as his master—called around him those whom he thought worthy to receive his precepts, and pointed out to them the divine lineaments, which he felt could never perish. They regarded him, with reverence, as most favoured of mortals. They delighted to sit in the seat of the disciple, not in that of the scorner. How much enjoyment have the people lost by being exalted into judges! The ascent of literature has been rendered smooth and easy, but its rewards are proportionably lessened in value. With how holy a zeal did the aspirant once gird himself to tread the unworn path; how delectably was he refreshed by each plant of green; how intensely did he enjoy every prospect, from the lone and embowered resting-places of his journey! Now, distinctions are levelled—the zest of intellectual pleasures is taken away; and no one hour, like that of Archimedes, ever repays a life of toil. The appetite, satiated with luxuries cheaply acquired, requires new stimulants—even criticism palls—and private slander must be mingled with it to give the necessary relish. Happily, these evils will, at last, work out their own remedy. Scorn, of all human emotions, leaves the frailest monuments behind it. That light which now seems to play around the weapons of periodical criticism, is only like the electrical flame which, to the amazement of the superstitious, wreathes the sword of the Italian soldier on the approach of a storm, vapourish and fleeting. Those mighty poets of our time—who are now overcoming the derision of the critics—will be immortal witnesses of their shame. These will lift their heads, "like mountains when the mists are rolled away," imperishable memorials of the true genius of our time, to the most distant ages.

MODERN PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

[NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]

LITTLE did the authors of the Spectator, the Tatler, and the Guardian, think, while gratifying the simple appetites of our fathers for our periodical literature, how great would be the number, and how extensive the influence, of their successors in the nineteenth century. Little did they know that they were preparing the way for this strange era in the world of letters, when Reviews and Magazines supersede the necessity of research or thought—when each month they become more spirited, more poignant, and more exciting—and on every appearance awaken a pleasing crowd of turbulent sensations in authors, contributors, and the few who belong to neither of these classes, unknown to our laborious ancestors. Without entering, at present, into the inquiry whether this system be, on the whole, as beneficial as it is lively, we will just lightly glance at the chief of its productions, which have such varied and extensive influences for good or for evil.

The *Edinburgh Review*—though its power is now on the wane—has perhaps, on the whole, produced a deeper and more extensive impression on the public mind than any other work of its species. It has two distinct characters—that of a series of original essays, and a critical examination of the new works of particular authors. The first of these constitutes its fairest claim to honourable distinction. In this point of view, it has one extraordinary merit, that instead of partially illustrating only one set of doctrines, it contains disquisitions equally convincing on almost all sides of almost all questions of literature or state policy. The "bane and antidote" are frequently to be found in the ample compass of its volumes, and not unfrequently from the same pen. Its Essays on Political Economy display talents of a very uncommon order. Their writers have contrived to make the dryest subjects enchanting, and the lowest and most debasing theories beautiful. Touched by them, the wretched dogmas of expediency have worn the air of venerable truths, and the degrading speculations of Malthus have appeared full of benevolence and of wisdom. They have exerted the uncommon art, while working up a sophism into every possible form, to seem as though they had boundless store of reasons to spare—a very exuberance of proof—which the clearness of their argument rendered it unnecessary to use. The celebrated Editor of this work, with little imagination—little genuine wit—and no clear view of any great and central principles of criticism, has contrived to dazzle, to astonish, and occasionally to delight, multitudes of readers, and, at one period, to hold the temporary fate of authors at his will. His qualities are all singularly adapted to his office. Without deep feeling, which few can understand, he has a quick sensibility with which all sympathize; without a command of images, he has a glittering radiance of words which the most superficial may admire; neither too hard-hearted always to refuse his admiration, nor too kindly to suppress a sneer, he has been enabled to appear most witty, most wise, and most eloquent, to those who have chosen him for their oracle. As Reviewers, who have exercised a fearful power over the hearts and the destinies of young aspirants to fame, this gentleman, and his varied coadjutors, have done many great and irreparable wrongs. Their very motto, "Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur," applied to works offending only by their want of genius, asserted a fictitious crime to be punished by a voluntary tribunal. It implied that the author of a dull book was a criminal, whose sensibilities justice required to be stretched on the rack, and whose inmost soul it was a sacred duty to lacerate! They even carried this atrocious absurdity farther—represented youthful poets as *prima facie* guilty; "swarming with a vicious fecundity, which invited and required destruction;" and spoke of the publication of verses as evidence, in itself, of want of sense, to be rebutted only by proofs of surpassing genius.* Thus the sweetest hopes were to be rudely broken—the loveliest visions of existence were to be dissipated—the most ardent and most innocent souls were to be wrung with unutterable anguish—and a fearful risk incurred of crushing genius too mighty for sudden development, or of changing its energies into poison—in order that the public might be secured from the possibility of worthlessness becoming attractive, or individuals shielded from the misery of looking into a work which would not tempt their farther perusal! But the Edinburgh Review has not been contented with deriding the pretensions of honest, but ungifted, aspirants; it has pursued with misrepresentation and ridicule the loftiest and the gentlest spirits of the age, and has prevented the world, for a little season, from recognising and enjoying their genius. One of their earliest numbers contained an elaborate tissue of gross derision on that delicate production of feeling and of fancy—that fresh revival of the old English drama in all its antique graces—that piece of natural sweetness and of wood-land beauty—the tragedy of *John Woodvil*. They directed the same species of barbarous ridicule against the tale of *Cristabel*, trying to excite laughter by the cheap process of changing the names of its heroines into Lady C. and Lady G., and employing the easy art of transmuting its romantic incidents into the language of frivolous life, to destroy the fame of its most profound and imaginative author. The mode of criticism adopted on this occasion might, it is obvious, be used with equal success, to give to the purest and loftiest of works a ludicrous air. But the mightiest offence of the Edinburgh Review is the wilful injustice which it has done to Wordsworth, or rather to the multitude whom it has debarred from the noblest stock of intellectual delights to be found in modern poetry, by the misrepresentation and the scorn which it has poured on his effusions. It would require a far longer essay than this to expose all the arts (for *arts* they have been) which the Review has employed to depreciate this holiest of living bards. To effect this malignant design, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, have been constantly represented as forming one perverse school or band of innovators—though there are perhaps no poets whose whole style and train of thought more essentially differ. To the same end, a few peculiar expressions—a few attempts at simplicity of expression on simple themes—a few extreme instances of naked language, which the fashionable gaudiness of poetry had incited—were dwelt on as exhibiting the poet's intellectual character, while passages of the purest and most majestic beauty, of the deepest pathos, and of the noblest music, were regarded as unworthy even to mitigate the critic's scorn. To this end, Southey—who, with all his rich and varied accomplishments, has comparatively but a small portion of Wordsworth's genius—and whose "wild and wondrous lays" are the very antithesis to Wordsworth's intense musings on humanity, and new consecrations of familiar things—was represented as redeeming the school which his mightier friend degraded. To this end, even Wilson—one who had delighted to sit humbly at the feet of Wordsworth, and who derived his choicest inspirations from him—was praised as shedding unwonted lustre over the barrenness of his master. But why multiply examples? Why attempt minutely to expose critics, who in "thoughts which do often lie too deep for tears" can find matter only for jesting—who speak of the high, imaginative conclusion of the White Doe of Rylston as a fine compliment of which they do not know the meaning—and who begin a long and laborious article on the noblest philosophical poem in the world with—"*This will never do?*"

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* See Ed. Rev., No. 43, p. 68.

The *Quarterly Review*, inferior to the Edinburgh in its mode of treating matters of mere reason—and destitute of that glittering eloquence of which Mr. Jeffrey has been so lavish—is far superior to it in its tone of sentiment, taste, and morals. It has often given intimations of a sense that there are "more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in the philosophy" of the Northern Reviewers. It has not regarded the wealth of nations as every thing, and the happiness of nations as nothing—it has not rested all the foundations of good on the shifting expediences of time—it has not treated human nature as a mere problem for critics to analyze and explain. Its articles on travels have been richly tinged with a spirit of the romantic. Its views of religious sectarianism—unlike the flippant impieties of its rival—have been full of real kindliness and honest sympathy. Its disquisitions on the state of the poor have been often replete with thoughts "informed by nobleness," and rich in examples of lowly virtue, which have had power to make the heart glow with a genial warmth which Reviews can rarely inspire.

Its attack on Lady Morgan, whatever were the merits of her work, was one of the coarsest insults ever offered in print by man to woman. But perhaps its worst piece of injustice was its laborious attempt to torture and ruin Mr. Keats, a poet, then of extreme youth, whose work was wholly unobjectionable in its tendencies, and whose sole offence was a friendship for one of the objects of the Reviewer's hatred, and his courage to avow it. We can form but a faint idea of what the heart of a young poet is, when he first begins to exercise his celestial faculties—how eager and tremulous are his hopes—how strange and tumultuous are his joys—how arduous is his difficulty of imbodying his rich imaginings in mortal language—how sensibly alive are all his feelings to the touches of this rough world! Yet we can guess enough of these to estimate, in some degree, the enormity of a cool attack on a soul so delicately strung—with such aspirations and such fears—in the beginning of its high career. Mr. Keats—who now happily has attained the vantage-ground whence he may defy criticism—was cruelly or wantonly held up to ridicule in the Quarterly Review—to his transitory pain, we fear, but to the lasting disgrace of his traducer. Shelley has less ground of complaining—for he who attacks established institutions with a martyr's spirit, must not be surprised if he is visited with a martyr's doom. All ridicule of Keats was unprovoked insult and injury—an attack on Shelley was open and honest warfare, in which there is nothing to censure but the mode in which it was conducted. To deprecate his principles—to confute his reasonings—to expose his inconsistencies—to picture forth vividly all that his critics believed respecting the tendencies of his works—was just and lawful; but to give currency to slanderous stories respecting his character, and above all, darkly to insinuate guilt which they forebore to develope, was unmanly, and could only serve to injure an honourable cause. Scarcely less disgraceful to the Review is the late elaborate piece of abuse against that great national work, the new edition of Stephens's Greek Thesaurus. It must, however, be confessed, that several articles in recent numbers of the Review have displayed very profound knowledge of the subjects treated, and a deep and gentle spirit of criticism.

The *British Review* is, both in evil and good, far below the two great Quarterly Journals. It is, however, very far from wanting ability, and as it lacks the gall of its contemporaries, and speaks in the tone of real conviction, though we do not subscribe to all its opinions, we offer it our best wishes.

The *Pamphleteer* is a work of very meritorious design. Its execution, depending less on the voluntary power of its editor than that of any other periodical work, is necessarily unequal. On the whole, it has imbodied a great number of valuable essays—which give a view of different sides of important questions, like the articles of the Edinburgh, but without the alloy which the inconsistency of the writers of the last mingle with their discussions. It has, we believe, on one or two occasions, suggested valuable hints to the legislature—especially in its view of the effects arising from the punishment of the pillory—which, although somewhat vicious and extravagant in its style, set the evils of that exhibition in so clear a light, that it was shortly after abolished, except in the instance of perjury. As the subject had not been investigated before, and the abolition followed so speedily, it may reasonably be presumed that this essay had no small share in terminating an infliction in which the people were, at once, judges and executioners—all the remains of virtue were too often extinguished —and justice perpetually insulted in the execution of its own sentences.

The *Retrospective Review* is a bold experiment in these times, which well deserves to succeed, and has already attained far more notice than we should have expected to follow a periodical work which relates only to the past. To unveil with a reverent hand the treasures of other days—to disclose ties of sympathy with old time which else were hidden—to make us feel that beauty and truth are not things of yesterday—is the aim of no mean ambition, in which success will be without alloy, and failure without disgrace. There is an air of youth and inexperience doubtless about some of the articles; but can any thing be more pleasing than to see young enthusiasm, instead of dwelling on the gauds of the "ignorant present," fondly cherishing the venerableness of old time, and reverently listening to the voices of ancestral wisdom? The future is all visionary and unreal—the past is the truly grand, and substantial and abiding. The airy visions of hope vanish as we proceed; but nothing can deprive us of our interest in that which has been. It is good, therefore, to have one periodical work exclusively devoted to "auld lang syne." It is also pleasant to have one which, amidst an age whose literature is "rank with all unkindness," is unaffected by party or prejudice, which feeds no depraved appetite, which ministers to no unworthy passion, but breathes one tender and harmonious spirit of revering love for the great departed. We shall rejoice, therefore, to see this work "rich with the spoils of time," and gradually leading even the mere readers of periodical works, to feel with the gentle author of that divine sonnet, written in a blank leaf of Dugdale's Monasticon:—

> "Not harsh nor rugged are the winding ways
> Of hoar antiquity, but strewn with flowers."

These, we believe, are all the larger periodical works of celebrity not devoted to merely scientific purposes. Of the lesser Reviews, the *Monthly*, as the oldest, claims the first notice; though we cannot say much in its praise. A singular infelicity has attended many of its censures. To most of those who have conduced to the revival of poetry it has opposed its jeers and its mockeries. Cowper, who first restored "free nature's grace" to our pictures of rural scenery—whose timid and delicate soul shrunk from the slighest encounter with the world—whose very satire breathed gentleness and good-will to all his fellows—was agonized by its unfeeling scorn. Kirke White, another spirit almost too gentle for earth—painfully struggling by his poetical efforts to secure the scanty means of laborious study, was crushed almost to earth by its pitiable sentence, and his brief span of life filled with bitter anguish. This Review seems about twenty years behind the spirit of the times; and this, for a periodical work, is fully equal to a century in former ages.

Far other notice does the *Eclectic Review* require. It is, indeed, devoted to a party; and to a party whose opinions are not very favourable to genial views of humanity, or to deep admiration of human genius. But not all the fiery zeal of sectarianism which has sometimes blazed through its disquisitions—nor all the strait-laced nicety with which it is sometimes disposed to regard earthly enjoyments—nor all the gloom which its spirit of Calvinism sheds on the mightiest efforts of virtue—can prevent us from feeling the awe-striking influences of honest principle—of hopes which are not shaken by the fluctuations of time—of faith which looks to "temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The Eclectic Review, indeed, in its earliest numbers, seemed resolved to oppose the spirit of its religion to the spirit of intellect and humanity, and even went to the fearful excess of heaping the vilest abuse on Shakspeare, and of hinting that his soul was mourning in the torments of hell, over the evils which his works had occasioned in the world.* But its conductors have since

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* This marvellous effusion of bigotry is contained in an article on Twiss's Index to Shakspeare in the third volume of the Review, p. 75. The Reviewer commences with the following tremendous sentence:—

"If the compiler of these volumes had been properly sensible of the value of time, and the relation which the employment of it bears to his eternal state, we should not have had to present our readers with the pitiable spectacle of a man advanced in years consuming the embers of vitality in making a complete verbal Index to the Plays of Shakspeare."

After acknowledging the genius of Shakspeare, the Reviewer observes, "He has been called, and justly too, the 'Poet of Nature.' A slight acquaintance with the religion of the Bible will show that it is of human nature in its worst shape, deformed by the basest passions, and agitated by the most vicious propensities, that the poet became the priest; and the incense offered at the altar of his goddess will spread its poisonous fumes over the hearts of his countrymen, till the memory of his works is extinct. Thousands of unhappy spirits, and thousands yet to increase their number, will everlastingly look back with unutterable anguish on the nights and days in which the plays of Shakspeare ministered to their guilty delights." The Reviewer further complains of the inscription on Garrick's tomb (which is absurd enough, though on far different grounds)—as "the absurd and impious epitaph upon the tablet raised *to one of the miserable retailers of his impurities!*" "We commiserate," continues the critic, "the heart of the man who can read the following lines without indignation:—

> 'And till eternity, with power sublime,
> Shall mark the mortal hour of hoary time,
> Shakspeare and Garrick, like twin stars, shall shine,
> And each irradiate with a beam divine.'

Par nobile fratrum! Your fame *shall* last during the empire of vice and misery, in the extension of which you have *acted* so great a part! We make no apology for our sentiments, unfashionable as they are. Feeling the importance of the condition of man as a moral agent, accountable not merely for the direct effects, but also for the remotest influence of his actions, *while we execrate* the changed, or have grown wiser. Their Reviews of poetry have been, perhaps, on the whole, in the purest and the gentlest spirit of any which have been written in this age of criticism. Without resigning their doctrines, they have softened and humanized those who profess them, and have made their system of religion look smilingly, while they have striven to preserve it unspotted from the world. If occasionally they introduce their pious feelings where we regard them as misplaced, we may smile, but not in scorn.* Their zeal is better than heartless indifference—their honest denunciations are not like the sneers of envy or the heartless jests which a mere desire of applause inspires. It is something to have real principle in times like these—a sense of things beyond our frail nature—even where the feeling of the eternal is saddened by too harsh and exclusive views of God, and of his children: for, as observed by one of our old poets,

> ——"Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man!"†

The *British Critic* is a highly respectable work, which does not require our praise, or offer any marks for our censure. It is, in a great measure, devoted to the interests of the church and of her ministers. It has sometimes shown a little sourness in its controversial discussions—but this is very different, indeed, from using cold sneers against unopposing authors. Its articles of criticism on poetry—if not adorned by any singular felicity of expression—have often been, of late, at once clear-sighted and gentle.

The *Edinburgh Monthly Review* is, on the whole, one of the ablest and fairest of the Monthly Reviews, though somewhat disproportionably filled with disquisitions on matters of state policy.

Few literary changes within the late changeful years have been more remarkable than the alteration in the style and spirit of the magazines. Time was when their modest ambition reached only to the reputation of being the "abstracts and brief chronicles" of passing events—when they were well pleased to afford vent to the sighs of a poetical lover, or to give light fluttering for a month to an epigram on a lady's fan—when a circumstantial account of a murder, or an authentic description of a birth-day dress, or the nice development of a family receipt, communicated, in their pages, to maiden ladies of a certain age an incalculable pleasure—and when the learned deciphering of an inscription on some rusty coin sufficed to give them a venerableness in the eyes of the old. If they, then, ever aspired to criticism, it was in mere kindness—to give a friendly greeting to the young adventurer, and afford him a taste of unmingled pleasure at the entrance of his perilous journey. Now they are full of wit, satire, and pungent remark—touching familiarly on the profoundest questions of philosophy as on the lightest varieties of manners—sometimes overthrowing a system with a joke, and destroying a reputation in the best humour in the world. One magazine—the *Gentleman's*—almost alone retains "the homely beauty of the good old cause," in pristine simplicity of style. This periodical work is worthy of its title. Its very dulness is agreeable to us. It is as destitute of sprightliness and of gall as in the first of its years. Its antiquarian disquisitions are very pleasant, giving us the feeling of sentiment without seeming to obtrude it on us, or to be designed for a display of the peculiar sensibility of their authors. We would not on any account lose the veteran Mr. Urban—though he will not, of course, suffice as a substitute for his juvenile competitors—but we heartily wish that he may go flourishing on in his green old age and honest self-complacency, to tell old stories, and remind us of old times, undisturbed by his gamesome and ambitious progeny!

Yet we must turn from his gentle work to gaze on the bright Aurora Borealis, the new and ever-varying Northern Light—*Blackwood's Magazine*. We remember no work of which so much might be truly said, both in censure and in eulogy—no work, at some times so profound, and at others so trifling—one moment so instinct with noble indignation, the next so pitifully falling into the errors it had denounced—in one page breathing the deepest and the kindliest spirit of criticism, in another condescending to give currency to the lowest calumnies. The air of young life—the exuberance both of talent and of animal spirits—which this work indicates, will excuse much of that wantonness which evidently arises from the fresh spirit of hope and of joy. But there are some of its excesses which nothing can palliate, which can be attributed to nothing but malignant passions, or to the baser desire of extending its sale. Less censurable, but scarcely less productive of unpleasant results, is its practice of dragging the peculiarities, the conversation, and domestic habits of distinguished individuals into public view, to gratify a diseased curiosity at the expense of men by whom its authors have been trusted. Such a course, if largely followed, would destroy all that is private and social in life, and leave us nothing but our public existence. How must the joyous intercourses of society be chilled, and the free unbosoming of the soul be checked, by the feeling that some one is present who will put down every look, and word, and tone, in a note-book, and exhibit them to the com-

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names, we cannot but shudder at the state of those who have opened fountains of impurity at which fashion leads its successive generations greedily to drink."—Merciful Heaven!

[*] We will give an instance of this—with a view to exhibit the peculiarities into which exclusive feelings lead; for observation, not for derision. In a very beautiful article on Wordsworth's Excursion, the critic notices a stanza, among several, on the death of Fox, where the poet—evidently not referring to the questions of immortality and judgment, but to the deprivations sustained by the world in the loss of the objects of its admiration—exclaims,

> "A power is passing from the earth
> To breathless nature's vast abyss;
> But when the mighty pass away,
> What is it more than this,
> That man, who is from God sent forth,
> Doth yet to God return?
> Such ebb and flow will ever be,
> Then wherefore shall we mourn?"

On which the Reviewer observes; "The question in the last two lines needs no answer: to that in the four preceding ones we must reply distinctly, 'It is appointed to men once to die, but *after* this the JUDGMENT.'"—Heb. ix. v. 27.

[†] Daniel.

mon gaze! If the enshading sanctities of life are to be cut away, as in Peter's Letters, or in the Letters from the Lakes—its joys will speedily perish. When they can no longer nestle in privacy, they will wither. We cannot, however, refuse to Blackwood's contributors the praise of great boldness in throwing away the external dignities of literature, and mingling their wit and eloquence and poetry with the familiarities of life, with an ease which nothing but the consciousness of great and genuine talent could inspire or justify. Most of their jests have, we think, been carried a little too far. The town begins to sicken of their pugilistic articles; to nauseate the blended language of Olympus and St. Giles's; to long for inspiration from a purer spring than Belsher's tap; and to desire sight of Apollo and the Muses in a brighter ring than that of Moulsey-hurst. We ought not to forget the debt which we owe to this magazine for infusing something of the finest and profoundest spirit of the German writers into our criticism, and for its "high and hearted" eulogies of the greatest, though not the most popular of our living poets.

We have thus impartially, we think, endeavoured to perform the delicate task of characterizing the principal contemporaries and rivals of the New Monthly Magazine;—of which our due regard to the Editor's modesty forbids us to speak.

ON THE GENIUS AND WRITINGS OF WORDSWORTH.

[NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]

How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh nor crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute!—MILTON.

Blessings be on him and immortal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,
The *Poet* who on earth hath made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!—WORDSWORTH.

OUR readers will be disappointed if they expect to find in this article any of the usual flippancies of criticism. Were we accustomed to employ them, its subject would utterly confound us. Strange is their infatuation who can fancy that the merits of a great poet are *subjected* to their decision, and that they have any authority to pass judicial censures, or confer beneficent praises, on one of the divinest of intellects! We shall attempt to set forth the peculiar immunities and triumphs of Wordsworth's genius, not as critics, but as disciples. To him our eulogy is nothing. But we would fain induce our readers to follow us "where we have garnered up our hearts," and would endeavour to remove those influences by which malignity and prejudice have striven to deter them from seeking some of the holiest of those living springs of delight which poets have opened for their species.

A minute discussion of Wordsworth's *system* will not be necessary to our design. It is manifestly absurd to refer to it as a test of his poetical genius. When an author has given numerous creations to the world, he has furnished positive evidence of the nature and extent of his powers, which must preclude the necessity of deducing an opinion of them from the truth or falsehood of his theories. One noble imagination—one profound and affecting sentiment—or one new gleam cast on the inmost recesses of the soul, is more than a sufficient compensation for a thousand critical errors. False doctrines of taste can endure only for a little season, but the productions of genius are "for all time." Its discoveries cannot be lost—its images will not perish—its most delicate influences cannot be dissipated by the changes of times and of seasons. It may be a curious and interesting question, whether a poet laboriously builds up his fame with purpose and judgment, or, as has most falsely been said of Shakspeare, "grows immortal in his own despite;" but it cannot affect his highest claims to the gratitude and admiration of the world. If Milton preferred Paradise Regained to Paradise Lost, does that strange mistake detract from our revering love? What would be our feeling towards critics, who should venture to allude to it as a proof that his works were unworthy of perusal, and decline an examination of those works themselves on the ground that his perverse taste sufficiently proved his want of genius? Yet this is the mode by which popular Reviewers have attempted to depreciate Wordsworth—they have argued from his theories to his poetry, instead of examining the poetry itself—as if their reasoning was better than the fact in question, or as if one eternal image set up in the stateliest region of poesy, had not value to outweigh all the truths of criticism, or to atone for all its errors?

Not only have Wordsworth's merits been improperly rested on his system, but that system itself has been misrepresented with no common baseness. From some of the attacks directed against it, a reader might infer that it recommended the choice of the meanest subjects, and their treatment in the meanest way; and that it not only represented poetry as fitly employed on things in themselves low and trivial, but that it forbade the clustering and delicate fancies about them, or the shedding on them any reconciling and softening lustre. Multitudes, indeed, have wondered as they read, not only that any persons should be deluded by its perverse insipidities, but that critics should waste their ridicule on an author who resigned at once all pretensions to the poetic art. In reality, this calumniated system has only reference to the diction, and to the subjects of poetry. It has merely taught, that the *diction* of poetry is not different from that of prose, and suggested that themes hitherto little dwelt on, were not unsuited to the bard's divinest uses. Let us briefly examine what ground of offence there is in the assertion or application of these positions.

Some have supposed that by rejecting a diction as peculiar to poetry, Wordsworth denied to it those qualities which are its essence, and those "harmonious numbers" which its thoughts "voluntarily move." Were his language equivocal, which it is not, the slightest glance at his works would show that he could have no design to exclude from it the stateliest imaginings, the most felicitous allusions, or the choicest and most varied music. He objected only to a peculiar phraseology—a certain hacknied strain of inversion—which had been set up as distinguishing poetry from prose, and which, he contended, was equally false in either. What is there of pernicious heresy in this, unless we make the crafty politician's doctrine, that speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts, the great principle of poetry? If words are fitly combined only to convey ideas to the mind, each word having a fixed meaning in itself, no different mode of collocation can be requisite when the noblest sentiment is to be imbodied, from that which is proper when the dryest fact is to be asserted. Each term employed by a poet has as determinate an office—as clearly means one thing as distinguished from all others—as a mathematician's scientific phrases. If a poet wishes lucidly to convey a grand picture to the mind, there can be no reason why he should resort to another mode of speech than that which he would employ in delivering the plainest narrative. He will, of course, use other and probably more beautiful words, because they properly belong to his subject; but he will not use any different order in their arrangement, because in both cases his immediate object is the same—the clear communication of his own idea to the mind of his reader. And this is true not only of the chief object of the passage, but of every hinted allusion, or nice shade of feeling, which may adorn it. If by "poetic diction" is intended the vivid expression of poetic thoughts, to annihilate it, is to annihilate poetry; but if it means certain ornamental phrases and forms of language not necessary to such expression, it is, at best, but a splendid error. Felicity of language can never be other than the distinct expression of felicitous thought. The only art of diction in poetry, as in prose, is the nice bodying forth of each delicate vibration of the feelings, and each soft shade of the images, in words which at once make us conscious of their most transient beauty. At all events, there was surely no offence in an individual's rejecting the aid of a style regarded as poetic, and relying for his fame on the naked majesty of his conceptions. The triumph is more signal when the Poet uses language as a mirror, clear, and itself invisible, to reflect his creations in their native hues,—than when he employs it as a stained and fallacious medium to exhibit its own varieties of tint, and to show the objects which it partially reveals in its own prismatic colouring.

But it is said that the subjects of Wordsworth's poetry are not in themselves so lofty as those which his noblest predecessors have chosen. If this be true, and he has yet succeeded in discovering within them poetical affinities, or in shedding on them a new consecration, he does not surely deserve ill of his species. He has left all our old objects of veneration uninjured, and has enabled us to recognise new ones in the peaceful and familiar courses of our being. The question is not whether there are more august themes than those which he has treated, but whether these last have any interest, as seen in the light which he has cast around them. If they have, the benefits which he has conferred on humanity are more signal, and the triumph of his own powers is more undivided and more pure, than if he had treated on subjects which we have been accustomed to revere. We are more indebted to one who opens to us a new and secluded pathway in the regions of fantasy with its own verdant inequalities and delicate overshadings of foliage, than if he had stepped majestically in the broad and beaten highway to swell the triumphant procession of laurelled bards. Is it matter of accusation that a poet has opened visions of glory about the ordinary walks of life—that he has linked holiest associations to things which hitherto have been regarded without emotion—that he has made beauty "a simple product of the common day?" Shall he be denied the poetic faculty, who, without the attractions of story—without the blandishments of diction—without even the aid of those associations which have encrusted themselves around the oldest themes of the poet, has for many years excited the animosities of the most popular critics, and mingled the love and admiration of his genius with the life-blood of hearts neither unreflecting nor ungentle?

But most of the subjects of Mr. Wordsworth, though not arrayed in any adventitious pomp, have a real and innate grandeur. True it is, that he moves not among the regalities, but among the humanities of his art. True it is, that his poetry does not "make its bed and procreant cradle" in the "jutting, frieze, cornice, or architrave" of the glorious edifices of human power. The universe, in its naked majesty, and man in the plain dignity of his nature, are his favourite themes. And is there no might, no glory, no sanctity in these? Earth has her own venerablenesses—her awful forests, which have darkened her hills for ages with tremendous gloom; her mysterious springs pouring out everlasting waters from unsearchable recesses; her wrecks of elemental contests; her jagged rocks, monumental of an earlier world. The lowliest of her beauties has an antiquity beyond that of the pyramids. The evening breeze has the old sweetness which it shed over the fields of Canaan, when Isaac went out to meditate. The Nile swells with its rich waters towards the bulrushes of Egypt, as when the infant Moses nestled among them, watched by the sisterly love of Miriam. Zion's hill has not passed away with its temple, nor lost its sanctity amidst the tumultuous changes around it, nor even by the accomplishment of that awful religion of types and symbols which once was enthroned on its steeps. The sun to which the poet turns his eye is the same which shone over Thermopylæ; and the wind to which he listens swept over Salamis, and scattered the armaments of Xerxes. Is a poet utterly deprived of fitting themes, to whom ocean, earth, and sky, are open—who has an eye for the most evanescent of nature's hues, and the most ethereal of her graces—who can "live in the rainbow and play in the plighted clouds," or send into our hearts the awful loneliness of regions "consecrate to eldest time?" Is there nothing in man, considered abstractedly from the distinctions of this world—nothing in a being who is in the infancy of an immortal life—who is lackeyed by "a thousand liveried angels"—who is even "splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave"—to awaken ideas of permanence, solemnity, and grandeur? Are there no themes sufficiently exalted for poetry in the midst of death and of life—in the desires and hopes which have their resting-place near the throne of the Eternal—in affections, strange and wondrous in their working, and unconquerable by time, or anguish, or destiny? How little, comparatively, of allusion is there even in Shakspeare, whose genius will not be regarded as rigid or austere, to other venerablenesses than those of the creation, and to qualities less common than the human heart! The very luxuries which surround his lovers —the pensive sweetnesses which steal away the sting from his saddest catastrophies—are drawn from man's universal immunities, and the eldest sympathies of the universe. The divinity which "hedges his kings" is only humanity's finer essence. Even his Lear is great only in intellectual might and in the terrible strangeness of his afflictions. While invested with the pomp and circumstance of his station, he is froward, impatient, thankless—less than a child in his liberality and in his resentments; but when he is cast abroad to seek a lodging with the owl, and to endure the fury of the elements, and is only a poor and despised old man, the exterior crust which a life of prosperity had hardened over his soul is broken up by the violence of his sorrows, his powers expand within his worn and wasted frame, his spirit awakens in its long-forgotten strength, and even in the wanderings of distraction gives hints of the profoundest philosophy, and manifests a real kindliness of nature —a sweet and most affecting courtesy—of which there was no vestige in the days of his pride. The regality of Richard lies not in "compliment extern"—the philosophy of Hamlet has a princeliness above that of his rank —and the beauties of Imogen are shed into her soul only by the selectest influences of creation.

The objects which have been usually regarded as the most poetical, derive from the soul itself the far larger share of their poetical qualities. All their power to elevate, to delight, or to awe us, which does not arise from mere form, colour, and proportion, is manifestly drawn from the instincts common to the species. The affections have first consecrated all that they revere. "Cornice, frieze, jutting, or architrave," are fit nestling-places for poetry, chiefly as they are the symbols of feelings of grandeur and duration in the hearts of the beholders. A poet, then, who seeks at once for beauty and sublimity in their native home of the human soul—who resolves "*non sectari rivulos sed petere fontes*"—can hardly be accused with justice of rejecting the themes most worthy of a bard. His office is, indeed, more arduous than if he selected those subjects about which hallowing associations have long clustered, and which other poets have already rendered sacred. But if he can discover new depths of affection in the soul—or throw new tinges of loveliness on objects hitherto common, he ought not to be despised in proportion to the severity of the work, and the absence of extrinsic aid! Wordsworth's persons are not invested with antique robes, nor clad in the symbols of worldly pomp, but they are "apparelled in celestial light." By his power "the bare earth and mountains bare" are covered with an imaginative radiance more holy than that which old Greek poets shed over Olympus. The world, as consecrated by his poetic wisdom, is an enchanted scene—redolent with sweet humanity, and vocal with "echoes from beyond the grave."

We shall now attempt to express the reasons for our belief in Wordsworth's genius, by first giving a few illustrations of his chief faculties, and then considering them in their application to the uses of philosophical poetry.

We allude first to the descriptive faculty, because, though not the least popular, it is the lowest which Wordsworth possesses. He shares it with many others, though few, we think, enjoy it in so eminent a degree. It is difficult, indeed, to select passages from his works which are merely descriptive; but those which approach nearest to portraiture, and are least imbued with fantasy, are masterpieces in their kind. Take, for example, the following picture of masses of vapour receding among the steeps and summits of the mountains, after a storm, beneath an azure sky; the earlier part of which seem almost like another glimpse of Milton's heaven; and the conclusion of which impresses us solemnly with the most awful visions of Hebrew prophecy:

> ——"A step,
> A single step which freed me from the skirts
> Of the blind vapour, open'd to my view
> Glory beyond all glory ever seen
> By waking sense or by the dreaming soul—
> The appearance instantaneously disclosed,
> Was of a mighty city—boldly say
> A wilderness of building, sinking far
> And self-withdrawn into a wondrous depth
> Far sinking into splendour—without end!
> Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
> With alabaster domes and silver spires;
> And blazing terrace upon terrace high
> Uplifted: here serene pavilions bright
> In avenues disposed; there towers begirt
> With battlements that on their restless fronts
> Bore stars, illumination of all gems!
> O 'twas an unimaginable sight;
> Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks, and emerald turf,
> Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
> Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
> Molten together, and composing thus,
> Each lost in each, that marvellous array
> Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
> Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
> In fleecy folds voluminous enwrapp'd.
> Right in the midst, where interspace appear'd
> Of open court, an object like a throne
> Beneath a shining canopy of state
> Stood fix'd, and fix'd resemblances were seen
> To implements of ordinary use,
> But vast in size, in substance glorified;
> Such as by Hebrew prophets were beheld
> In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power,
> For admiration and mysterious awe!"
>
> *Excursion*, *B.* II.

Contrast with this the delicate grace of the following picture, which represents the White Doe of Rylstone—that most beautiful of mysteries—on her Sabbath visit to the grave of her sainted lady:—

> "Soft—the dusky trees between
> And down the path through the open green
> Where is no living thing to be seen;
> And through yon gateway where is found,
> Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
> Free entrance to the church-yard ground;
> And right across the verdant sod
> Towards the very house of God;
> —Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
> Comes gliding in serene and slow,
> Soft and silent as a dream,
> A solitary Doe!
> White is she as lily in June;
> And beauteous as the silver moon,
> When out of sight the clouds are driven
> And she is left alone in heaven;
> Or like a ship some gentle day
> In sunshine sailing far away,
> A glittering ship, that hath the plain
> Of ocean for her own domain.
>
> * * * *
>
> What harmonious pensive changes
> Wait upon her as she ranges
> Round and through this pile of state,
> Overthrown and desolate!
> Now a step or two her way
> Is through space of open day,
> Where the enamour'd sunny light
> Brightens her that was so bright;
> Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
> Falls upon her like a breath,
> From some lofty arch or wall,
> As she passes underneath:
> Now some gloomy nook partakes
> Of the glory which she makes,—
> High-ribb'd vault of stone, or cell
> With perfect cunning framed, as well
> Of stone and ivy, and the spread
> Of the elder's bushy head;
> Some jealous and forbidding cell,
> That doth the living stars repel,
> And where no flower hath leave to dwell.
>
> * * * *
>
> —— Her's are eyes serenely bright,
> And on she moves—with pace how light!
> Nor spares to stoop her head, and taste
> The dewy turf, with flowers bestrown;
> And in this way she fares, till at last
> Beside the ridge of a grassy grave
> In quietness she lays her down;
> Gently as a weary wave
> Sinks, when the summer breeze hath died,
> Against an anchor'd vessel's side;
> Even so, without distress, doth she
> Lie down in peace, and lovingly."
>
> *White Doe of Rylstone, Canto* I.

What, as mere description, can be more masterly than the following picture of the mountain solitude, where a dog was found, after three months' watching by his master's body—though the touches which send the feeling of deep loneliness into the soul, and the bold imagination which represents the huge recess as visited by elemental presences, are produced by higher than descriptive powers?—

> "It was a cove, a huge recess,
> That keeps till June December's snow;
> A lofty precipice in front,
> A silent tarn below!
> Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
> Remote from public road or dwelling,
> Pathway, or cultivated land;
> From trace of human foot or hand.
>
> There sometimes does a leaping fish
> Send through the Tarn a lonely cheer;
> The crags repeat the raven's croak
> In symphony austere;
> Thither the rainbow comes, the cloud;
> And mists that spread the flying shroud,
> And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
> That if it could, would hurry past,
> But that enormous barrier binds it fast."

We must abstain from farther examples of the descriptive faculty, and allude to that far higher gift which Wordsworth enjoys in his profound acquaintance with the sanctities of the soul. He does not make us feel the strength of the passions, by their violent contests in a transient storm, but the measureless depth of the affections when they are stillest and most holy. We often meet in his works with little passages in which we seem almost to contemplate the well-springs of pure emotion and gentle pathos, and to see the old clefts in the rock of humanity whence they arise. In these we may not rarely perceive the true elements of tales of the purest sentiment and most genuine tragedies. No poet has done such justice to the depth and the fulness of maternal love. What, for instance, can be more tear-moving than these exclamations of a mother, who for seven years has heard no tidings of an only child, abandoning the false stay of a pride which ever does unholy violence to the sufferer?—

"Neglect me! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought; and, being blind,
Said, 'Pride shall help me in my wrong;
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed:' and that is true;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.
My son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour, or of gain,
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
Think not of me with grief or pain:
I now can see with better eyes;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies."

How grand and fearful are the following conjectures of her agony!

"Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maim'd, mangled by inhuman men;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den;
Or hast been summon'd to the deep
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep,
An incommunicable sleep."

And how triumphant does the great instinct appear in its vanquishing even the dread of mortal chilliness—asking and looking for spectres—and concluding that their appearance is not possible, because they come not to its intense cravings:—

"I look for ghosts; but none will force
Their way to me; 'tis falsely said
That ever there was intercourse
Between the living and the dead;
For surely then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite."

Of the same class is the poem on the death of a noble youth, who fell in attempting to bound over a chasm of the Wharf, and left his mother childless.—What a volume of thought is there in the little stanzas which follows:—

"If for a lover the lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death,—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day,
Which was to be to-morrow;
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And her's is a mother's sorrow!"

Here we are made to feel not only the vastness of maternal affection, but its difference from that of lovers. The last being a passion, has a tendency to grasp and cling to objects which may sustain it, and thus fixes even on those things which have swallowed its hopes, and draws them into its likeness. Death itself thus becomes a passion to one whom it has bereaved; or the waters which flowed over the object of once happy love, become a solace to the mourner, who nurses holy visions by their side. But an instinct which has none of that tendency to go beyond itself, when its only object is lost, has no earthly relief, but is left utterly desolate. The hope of a lover looks chiefly to a single point of time as its goal;—that of a mother is spread equally over existence, and when cut down, at once the blossoming expectations of a whole life are withered for ever.

Can any thing be more true or intense than the following description of remorse, rejecting the phantoms of superstitious horror as powerless, and representing lovely and uncomplaining forms of those whose memories the sufferer had dishonoured by his errors, casting their silent looks perpetually upon him:

——"Feebly must they have felt
Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards
Were turned on me—the face of her I loved;
The wife and mother pitifully fixing
Tender reproaches, insupportable!"

We will give but one short passage more to show the depth of Wordsworth's insight into our nature—but it is a passage which we think unequalled in its kind in the compass of poetry. Never surely was such a glimpse of beatific vision opened amidst mortal affliction; such an elevation given to seeming weakness; such consolation ascribed to bereaved love by the very heightening of its own intensities. The poet contends, that those whom we regard as dying broken-hearted for the loss of friends, do not really perish through despair; but have such vivid prospects of heaven, and such a present sense that those who have been taken from them are waiting for them there, that they wear themselves away in longings after the reality, and so hasten to enjoy it:—

——"Full oft the innocent sufferer sees
Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
To realize the vision with intense
And over-constant yearning—there—there lies
The excess by which the balance is destroy'd.
Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,
This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,
Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
For any passion of the soul that leads
To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths
Of time and change disdaining, takes its course
Along the line of limitless desires."

But the imaginative faculty is that with which Wordsworth is most eminently gifted. As the term IMAGINATION is often very loosely employed, it will be necessary for us here to state as clearly as possible our idea of its meaning. In our sense, it is *that power by which the spiritualities of our nature and the sensible images derived from the material universe are commingled at the will of the possessor.* It has thus a twofold operation—the bodying forth of feelings, sentiments, and ideas, in beautiful and majestic forms, and giving to them local habitations; and the informing the colours and the shapes of matter with the properties of the soul. The first of these workings of the faculty supplies the highest excellencies of the orator, and the philosophic bard. When Sophocles represents the eternal laws of morality as "produced in the pure regions of celestial air—having the Olympian alone for their parent—as not subject to be touched by the decays of man's mortal nature, or to be shaded by oblivion—for the divinity is mighty within them, and waxes not old:"[*] it is this which half gives to them a majestic personality, and dimly figures out their attributes. By the same process, the imaginative faculty, aiming at results less sublime but more definite and complete, gave individual shape to loves, graces, and affections, and endowed them with the bread of life. By this process, it shades over the sorrows which it describes by the beauties and the graces of nature, and tinges with gentle colouring the very language of affliction. In the second mode of its operation, on the other hand, it moves over the universe like the spirit of God on the face of the waters, and peoples it with glorious shapes, as in the Greek mythology, or sheds on it a consecrating radiance, and imparts to it an intense sympathy, as in the poems of these more reflective days. Although a harmonizing faculty, it can by the law of its essence only act on things which have an inherent likeness. It brings out the secret affinities of its objects; but it cannot combine things which nature has not prepared for union, because it does not add, but transfuses. Hence there can be no wild incongruity, no splendid confusion in its works. Those which are commonly regarded as its productions in the metaphorical speeches of "Irish eloquence," are their very reverse, and may serve by contrast to explain its realities. The highest and purest of its efforts are when the intensest elements of the human soul are mingled inseparably with the vastest majesties of the universe; as where Lear identifies his age with that of the heavens, and calls on them to avenge his wrongs by their community of lot; and where Timon "fixes his everlasting mansion upon the beached shore of the salt flood," that "once a day with its embossed froth the turbulent surge may cover him," scorning human tears, but desiring the vast ocean for his eternal mourner!

Of this transfusing and reconciling faculty—whether its office be to "clothe upon," or to spiritualize—Mr. Wordsworth is, in the highest degree, master. Of this, abundant proofs will be found in the latter portion of this article; at present we will only give a few examples. The first of these is one of the grandest instances of noble daring, completely successful, which poetry exhibits. After a magnificent picture of a single yew-tree, and a fine allusion to its readiness to furnish spears for old battles, the poet proceeds:

——— "But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal four of Borrowdale,
Join'd in one solemn and capacious grove;
Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine,
Upcoiling, and inveterately convolved,—
Not uninformed by fantasy and look
That threaten the profane;—a *piller'd* shade
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the *pining* umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for *festal purpose* deck'd
By *unrejoicing berries*, ghostly shapes
May meet at noon-tide—*Fear* and *trembling Hope*,
Silence and *Foresight*—*Death* the *Skeleton*
And *Time* the *Shadow*—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scatter'd o'er
With altars undisturb'd of mossy stone,
United worship; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glamarara's inmost caves."

Let the reader, when that first glow of intuitive admiration which this passage cannot fail to inspire is past, look back on the exquisite gradations by which it naturally proceeds from mere description to the sublime personification of the most awful abstractions, and the union of their fearful shapes in strange worship, or in listening to the deepest of nature's voices. The first lines—interspersed indeed with epithets drawn from the operations of mind, and therefore giving to them an imaginative tinge—are, for the most part, a mere picture of the august brotherhood of trees, though their very sound is in more august accordance with their theme than most of the examples usually produced of "echoes to the sense." Having completely set before us the image of the scene, the poet begins that enchantment by which it is to be converted into a fitting temple for the noontide spectres of Death and Time, by the general intimation that it is "not uninformed by fantasy and looks that threaten the profane"—then, by the mere epithet *pillared*, gives us the more particular feeling of a fane—then, by reference to the actual circumstances of the grassless floor of red-brown hue, preserves to us the peculiar features of the scene which thus he is hallowing—and at last gives to the roof and its berries a strange air of unrejoicing festivity—until we are prepared for the introduction of the phantasms, and feel that the scene could be fitted to no less tremendous a conclave. The place, without losing one of its individual features, is decked for the reception of these noon-tide shades, and we are prepared to muse on them with unshrinking eyes. How by a less adventurous but not less delightful process, does the poet impart to an evening scene on the Thames, at Richmond, the serenity of his own heart, and tinge it with softest and saddest hues of the fancy and the affections! The verses have all the richness of Collins, to whom they allude, and breathe a more profound and universal sentiment than is found in his sky-tinctured poetry.

"How richly glows the water's breast
  Before us tinged with evening hues,
While, facing thus the crimson west,
  The boat her silent course pursues!
And see how dark the backward stream!
  A little moment past so smiling!
And still perchance, with faithless gleam,
  Some other loiterer beguiling.

"Such views the youthful bard allure;
  But, heedless of the following gloom,
He deems their colours shall endure
  Till peace go with him to the tomb

---

[*] This passage—one of the noblest instances of the moral sublime—is from the Theban Œdipus, where it is uttered by the Chorus on some of the profane scoffs of the fated Iocasta:

Νομοι
'Υψιποδες γ' ερανιαν δ' αιθερ
Τεκνωθεντες, ων 'Ολυμπος
Πατηρ μονος, ὐδε νιν θνατα
Φυσις ανερων ετικτεν, ὐδε
Μης ποτε λαθα κατακοιμασει,
Μεγας εν τετοις Θεος,
Ουδε γηρασκει.

And let him nurse his fond deceit,
  And what if he must die in sorrow!
Who would not cherish dreams so sweet,
  Though grief and pain may come to-morrow?

"Glide gently thus, for ever glide,
  O Thames! that other bards may see
As lovely visions by thy side
  As now, fair river! come to me.
O glide, fair stream! for ever so,
  Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
Till all our minds for ever flow,
  As thy deep waters now are flowing.

"Vain thought!—Yet be as now thou art,
  That in thy waters may be seen
The image of a poet's heart,
  How bright, how solemn, how serene!"

The following delicious sonnet, inspired by the same scene, is one of the latest effusions of its author. We do not here quote it on account of its allusion to one of the most delightful of poets—nor of the fine unbroken ligament by which the harmony listened to by the later bard is connected with that which the earlier drank in, by the lineage of the songsters who keep up the old ravishment—but of that imaginative power, by which a sacredness is imparted to the place and to the birds, as though they performed unresting worship in the most glorious of cathedrals.

"Fame tells of groves from England far away*—
Groves that inspire the nightingale to trill
And modulate, with subtle reach of skill
Elsewhere unmatch'd, her ever-varying lay;
Such bold report I venture to gainsay:
For I have heard the *choir* of Richmond-hill
Chanting with *indefatigable* bill;
While I bethought me of a distant day;
When haply under shade of that same wood,
And scarcely conscious of the dashing oars
Plied steadily between those willowy shores,
The sweet-soul'd Poet of the Seasons stood—
Listening, and listening long, in rapturous mood,
Ye *heavenly* birds! to your progenitors."

The following "Thought of a Briton on the subjugation of Switzerland," has an elemental grandeur imbued with the intensest sentiment, which places it among the highest efforts of the imaginative faculty.

"Two voices are there; one is one of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven,
Thou from thine Alpine holds at length are driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft;
Then cleave, O cleave, to that which still is left:
For, high-soul'd maid, what sorrow would it be,
That mountain-floods should thunder as before,
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful voice be heard by thee!"

We have thus feebly attempted to give some glimpse into the essence of Wordsworth's powers—of his skill in delineating the forms of creation—of his insight into the spirit of man—and of his imaginative faculty. How he has applied these gifts to philosophical poetry, and what are the results of his contemplation, by their aid, on the external universe—human life—individual character—the vicissitudes of individual fortune—society at large—and the prospects of the species—we shall next proceed more particularly to examine.

The spirit of contemplation influences and directs all Wordsworth's poetical faculties. He does not create a variety of individual forms to vivify them with the Promethean fire of dramatic genius, and exhibit the living struggle of their passions and their affections in opposition to each other, or to destiny. "The moving accident is not his trade." He looks on humanity as from a more exalted sphere, though he feels his kindred with it while he gazes and yearns over it with deepest sympathy. No poet of ancient or modern times has dared so entirely to repose on the mere strength of his own powers. Others, indeed, have given hints of the divinest truths, even amidst their wildest and most passionate effusions. The tragedies of Sophocles, for example, abound in moralities expressed with a grace and precision which often ally the sentiment to an image and almost define it to the senses. In Shakspeare the wisdom is as much deeper as the passion is intenser; the minds of the characters, under the strongest excitements of love, hope, or agony, grow bright as well as warm, and in their fervid career shed abroad sparkles of fire, which light up, for an instant, the inmost sanctuaries of our nature. But few have ventured to send into the world essentially meditative poems, which none but the thoughtful can truly enjoy. Lucertius is the only writer of antiquity who has left a great work of this description; and he has unhappily lavished the boundless riches of genius on doctrines which are in direct opposition to the spirit of poetry. An apostle of a more genial faith, Wordsworth, stands pre-eminently—almost alone—a divine philosopher among the poets. It has been his singular lot, in this late age of the world, to draw little from those sources of interest which incident and situation supply—and to rest his claim to the gratitude and admiration of the people on his majestical contemplations of man and the universe.

The philosophical poetry of Wordsworth is not more distinct from the dramatic, or the epic, than from the merely didactic and moral. He has thrown into it as much of profound affection, as much of ravishing loveliness, as much of delicate fantasy, as adorn the most romantic tales, or the most passionate tragedies. If he sees all things "far as angel's ken," he regards them with human love. His imagination is never obscured amidst his reasonings, but is ever active to imbody the beautiful and the pure, and to present to us the most august moralities in "clear dream and solemn vision." Instead of reaching sublime conclusions by a painful and elaborate process, he discloses them by a single touch, he fixes them on our hearts for ever. So intense are his perceptions of moral beauty, that he feels the spirit of good however deeply hidden, and opens to our view the secret springs of love and of joy, where all has appeared barren to the ungifted observer. He can trace, prolong, and renew within us, those mysterious risings of delight in the soul which "may make a chrysome child to smile," and which, when half-experienced at long intervals in riper age, are to us the assurances of a better life. He follows with the nice touch of unerring sympathy all the most subtle workings of the spirit of good, as it makes its little sanctuaries in hearts unconscious of its presence, and blends its influences unheeded with ordinary thoughts, hopes, and sorrows. The old prerogatives of humanity, which long usage has made appear common, put on their own air of grandeur while he teaches us to revere them. When we first read his poetry, we look on all the mysteries of our being with a new reverence, and feel like children who, having been brought up in some deserted palace, learn for the first time the regality of their home—understand a venerableness in the faded escutcheons with which they were accustomed to play—and feel the figures on the stained windows, or on the decaying tapestry, which were only grotesque before speaking to their hearts in ancestral voices.

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* Wallachia is the country alluded to.

The consecration which Wordsworth has shed over the external world is in a great measure peculiar to his genius. In the Hebrew poetry there was no trace of particular description—but general images, such as of tall cedars, of green pastures, or of still waters, were alone permitted to aid the affections of the devout worshipper. The feeling of the vast and indistinct prevailed; for all in religion was symbolical and mysterious, and pointed to "temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In the exquisite masterpieces of Grecian inspiration, free nature's grace was almost excluded by the opposite tendency to admire only the definite and the palpable. Hence, the pictures of nymphs, satyrs, and deities, were perpetually substituted for views of the magnificence of earth and heaven. In the romantic poetry of modern times, the open face of nature has again been permitted to smile on us, and its freshness to glide into our souls. Nor has there been wanting "craft of delicate spirits" to shed lovelier tinges of the imagination on all its scenes—to scatter among them classical images like Ionic temples among the fair glades and deep woods of some rich domain—to call dainty groups of fairies to hold their revellings upon the velvet turf—or afford glimpses of angel wings floating at eventide in the golden perspective. But the imagination of Wordsworth has given to the external universe a charm which has never else, extensively at least, been shed over it. He has not personified the glorious objects of Creation—nor peopled them with beautiful and majestic shapes—but, without depriving them of their own reality, has imparted to them a life which makes them objects of affection and reverence. He enables us at once to enjoy the contemplation of their colours and forms, and to love them as human friends. He consecrates earth by the mere influences of sentiment and thought, and renders its scenes as enchanted as though he had filled them with Oriental wonders. Touched by him, the hills, the rocks, the hedge-rows, and the humblest flowers shine in a magic lustre, "which never was by sea or land," and which yet is strangely familiar to our hearts. These are not hallowed by him with "angel visits," nor by the presence of fair and immortal shapes, but by the remembrances of early joy, by lingering gleams of a brightness which has passed away, and dawnings of a glory to be revealed in the fulness of time. The lowliest of nature's graces have power to move and to delight him. "The clouds are touched, and in their silent faces does he read unutterable love." He listens to the voice of the cuckoo in early spring, till he "begets again the golden time of his childhood," and till the world, which is "fit home" for that mysterious bird, appears "an airy unsubstantial place." At the root of some old thorn, or beneath the branches of some time-honoured tree, he opens the sources of delicious musing, and suggests the first hints which lead through a range of human thoughts to the glories of our final destiny. When we traverse with him the "bare earth and mountains bare," we feel that "the place whereon we are standing is holy ground;" the melancholy brook can touch our souls as truly as a tragic catastrophe; the splendours of the western sky give intimation of "a joy past joy;" and the meanest flowers, and scanty blades of grass, awaken within us hopes too rapturous for smiles, and "thoughts which do often lie too deep for tears."

To give all the instances of this sublime operation of the imaginative faculty in Wordsworth, would be to quote the far larger portion of his works. A few lines, however, from the poem composed on the Banks of the Wye, will give our readers a deep glimpse into the inmost heart of his poetry, and of his poetical system, on the communion of the soul of man with the spirit of the universe. In this rapturous effusion—in which, with a wise prodigality, he hints and intimates the profoundest of those feelings which vivify all he has created—he gives the following view of the progress of his sympathy with the external world:—

——"Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days
And their glad animal movements, all gone by)
To me was all in all—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite: a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrow'd from the eye. That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn, nor murmur; other gifts
Have follow'd, for such loss I would believe
Abundant recompense. For I have learn'd
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity,
Not harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A spirit which disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,

And the blue sky, and in the mind of mind:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

There are none of the workings of our poet's imaginative faculty more wonderful in themselves, or more productive of high thoughts and intense sympathies, than those which have for their objects the grand abstractions of humanity—Life and Death, Childhood and Old Age. Every period of our being is to him not only filled with its own peculiar endearments and joys, but dignified by its own sanctities. The common forms of life assume a new venerableness when he touches them—for he makes us feel them in their connection with our immortality—even as the uncouth vessels of the Jewish law appeared sublime to those who felt that they were dedicated to the immediate service of Heaven. He ever leaves us conscious that the existence on whose beginning he expatiates, will endure for ever. He traces out those of its fibres which are eternal in their essence. He discovers in every part of our earthly course manifold intimations that these our human hearts will never die. Childhood is, to him, not only the season of novelty, of innocence, of joyous spirits, and of mounting hope—but of a dreamlike glory which assures to us that this world is not our final home. Age to him, is not a descent into a dark valley, but a "final eminence," where the wise may sit "in awful sovereignty" as on a high peak among the mountains in placid summer, and commune with Heaven, undisturbed by the lesser noises of the tumultuous world. One season of life is bound to another by "the natural piety" which the unchanging forms of nature preserve, and death comes at last over the deep and tranquil stream as it is about to emerge into a lovelier sunshine, as "a shadow thrown softly and lightly from a passing cloud."

The Ode in which Wordsworth particularly developes the intimations of immortality to be found in the recollections of early childhood, is, to our feelings, the noblest piece of lyric poetry in the world. It was the first poem of its author which we read, and never shall we forget the sensations which it excited within us. We had heard the cold sneers attached to his name—we had glanced over criticisms, "lighter than vanity," which represented him as an object for scorn "to point its slow unmoving finger at"—and here—in the works of this derided poet—we found a new vein of imaginative sentiment opened to us—sacred recollections brought back on our hearts with all the freshness of novelty, and all the venerableness of far-off time—the most mysterious of old sensations traced to a celestial origin—and the shadows cast over the opening of life from the realities of eternity renewed before us with a sense of their supernal causes! What a gift did we then inherit! To have the best and most imperishable of intellectual treasures—the mighty world of reminiscences of the days of infancy—set before us in a new and holier light; to find objects of deepest veneration where we had only been accustomed to love; to feel in all the touching mysteries of our past being the symbols and assurances of our immortal destiny! The poet has here spanned our mortal life as with a glorious rainbow, terminating on one side in infancy, and on the other in the realms of blessedness beyond the grave, and shedding even upon the middle of that course tints of unearthly colouring. The following is the view he has given of the fading glory of childhood—drawn in part from Oriental fiction, but imbodying the profoundest of elemental truths:—

"Our birth is but a sleep, and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere known its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God that is our home;
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth that daily farther from the east
Must travel still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day!"

But the following is the noblest passage of the whole; and such an outpouring of thought and feeling—such a piece of inspired philosophy—we do not believe exists elsewhere in human language:—

"O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether fluttering or at rest,
With new-born hope for ever in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realiz'd,
High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised;
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish us, and make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

After this rapturous flight, the author thus leaves to repose on the quiet lap of humanity.

and soothes us with a strain of such mingled solemnity and tenderness, as "might make angels weep:"

"What though the radiance which was once so bright,
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which having been, must ever be,
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering,
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And oh ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
Think not of any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquish'd one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

The genius of the poet, which thus dignifies and consecrates the abstractions of our nature, is scarcely less felicitous in its pictures of society at large, and in its philosophical delineations of the characters and fortunes of individual man. Seen through the holy medium of his imagination, all things appear "bright and solemn and serene"—the asperities of our earthly condition are softened away—and the most gentle and evanescent of its hues gleam and tremble over it. He delights to trace out those ties of sympathy by which the meanest of beings are connected with the general heart. He touches the delicate strings by which the great family of man are bound together, and thence draws forth sounds of choicest music. He makes us partake of those joys which are "spread through the earth to be caught in stray gifts by whoever will find" them—discloses the hidden wealth of the soul—finds beauty everywhere, and "good in every thing." He draws character with the softest pencil, and shades it with the pensive tints of gentlest thought. The pastoral of The Brothers—the story of Michael—and the histories in the Excursion which the priest gives while standing among the rustic graves of the church-yard, among the mountains, are full of exquisite portraits, touched and softened by a divine imagination which human love inspires. He rejoices also to exhibit that holy process by which the influences of creation are shed abroad in the heart, to excite, to mould, or to soften. We select the following stanzas from many passages of this kind of equal beauty, because in the fantasy of nature's making "a lady of her own," the object of the poet is necessarily developed with more singleness than where reference is incidentally made to the effect of scenery on the mind:—

"Three years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, a lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take,
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own!

Myself will to the darling be
Both law and impulse: and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power,
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn,
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean on air
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,
Shall pass into her face!"

But we must break off to give a passage in a bolder and most passionate strain, which represents the effect of the tropical grandeur and voluptuousness of nature on a wild and fiery spirit—at once awakening and half-redeeming its irregular desires. It is from the poem of "Ruth,"—a piece where the most profound of human affections is disclosed amidst the richest imagery, and incidents of wild romance are told with a Grecian purity of expression. The impulses of a beautiful and daring youth are thus represented as inspired by Indian scenery:

"The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food,
For him, a youth to whom was given
So much of earth, so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound,
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seem'd allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

Nor less to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of Nature wrought
Fair trees and lovely flowers;
The breezes their own languor lent;
The stars had feelings which they sent
Into those gorgeous bowers.

Yet in his worst pursuits, I ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent;
For passions link'd to forms as fair
And stately, needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment."

We can do little more than enumerate those pieces of narrative and character, which we esteem the best in their kind of our author's works. The old Cumberland Beggar is one of those which linger most tenderly on our memories. The poet here takes almost the lowliest of his species—an aged mendicant, one of the last of that class who made regular circuits amidst the cottages of the north—and after a vivid picture of his frame bent with years, of his slow motion and decayed senses, he asserts them not divorced from good—traces out the links which bind him to his fellows—and shows the benefit which even he can diffuse in his rounds, while he serves as a record to bind together past deeds and offices of charity—compels to acts of love by "the mild necessity of use" those whose hearts would otherwise harden—gives to the young "the first mild touch of sympathy and thought, in which they find their kindred with a world where want and sorrow are"—and enables even the poor to taste the joy of bestowing. This last blessing is thus set forth and illustrated by a precious example of self-denying goodness and cheerful hope, which is at once more tear-moving and more sublime than the finest things in Cowper:—

> ——"Man is dear to man; the poorest poor
> Long for some moments in a weary life
> When they can know and feel that they have been,
> Themselves, the fathers and the dealers out
> Of some small blessings; have been kind to such
> As needed kindness, for this single cause,
> That we have all of us one human heart.
> —Such pleasure is to one kind being known,
> My neighbour, when with punctual care, each week
> Duly as Friday comes, though prest herself
> With her own wants, she from her chest of meal
> Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
> Of this old mendicant, and, from her door
> Returning with invigorated heart,
> Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in Heaven."

Then, in the Excursion, there is the story of the Ruined Cottage, with its admirable gradations, more painful than the pathetic narratives of its author usually are, yet not without redeeming traits of sweetness, and a reconciling spirit which takes away its sting. There, too, is the intense history of the Solitary's sorrows—there the story of the Hanoverian and the Jacobite, who learned to snatch a sympathy from their bitter disputings, grew old in controversy and in friendship, and were buried side by side—there the picture of Oswald, the gifted and generous and graceful hero of the mountain solitude, who was cut off in the blossom of his youth—there the record of that pleasurable sage, whose house Death, after forty years of forbearance, visited with thronging summonses, and took off his family one after the other, "with intervals of peace," till he too, with cheerful thoughts about him, was "overcome by unexpected sleep in one blest moment," and as he lay on the "warm lap of his mother earth," "gathered to his fathers." There are those fine vestiges, and yet finer traditions and conjectures, of the good knight Sir Alfred Irthing, the "mild-hearted champion" who had retired in Elizabeth's days to a retreat among the hills, and had drawn around him a kindred and a family. Of him nothing remained but a gentle fame in the hearts of the villagers, an uncouth monumental stone grafted on the church-walls, which the sagest antiquarian might muse over in vain, and his name engraven in a wreath or posy around three bells with which he had endowed the spire. "So," exclaims the poet, in strains as touching and majestic as ever were breathed over the transitory grandeur of earth—

> "So fails, so languishes, grows dim and dies,
> All that this world is proud of. From their spheres
> The stars of human glory are cast down;
> Perish the roses, and the flowers of kings,
> Princes and emperors, and the crowns and palms
> Of all the mighty, withered, and consumed."

In the Excursion, too, is the exquisite tale of poor Ellen—a seduced and forsaken girl—from which we will give one affecting incident, scarcely to be matched, for truth and beauty, through the many sentimental poems and tales which have been founded on a similar wo:

> "—Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt
> Stands a tall ash tree; to whose topmost twig
> A thrush resorts, and annually chants,
> At morn and evening from that naked perch,
> While all the undergrove is thick with leaves,
> A time-beguiling ditty, for delight
> Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.
> —'Ay why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,
> 'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge;
> And nature that is kind in Woman's breast,
> And reason that in Man is wise and good,
> And fear of Him who is a righteous Judge,—
> Why do not these prevail for human life,
> To keep two hearts together, that began
> Their spring-time with one love, and that have need
> Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet
> To grant, or be received, while that poor bird,
> —O come and hear him! Thou who hast to me
> Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly creature,
> One of God's simple children that yet know not
> The universal Parent, how he sings
> As if he wished the firmament of Heaven
> Should listen, and give back to him the voice
> Of his triumphant constancy and love;
> The proclamation that he makes, how far
> His darkness doth transcend our fickle light!'
>
> "Such was the tender passage, not by me
> Repeated without loss of simple phrase,
> Which I perused, even as the words had been
> Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand
> To the blank margin of a Valentine,
> Bedropped with tears."

With these tear-moving expressions of ill-fated love, we may contrast the following rich picture of the affection in its early bloom, from the tale of Vandracour and Julia, which will show how delightedly the poet might have lingered in the luxuries of amatory song, had he not chosen rather to brood over the whole world of sentiment and passion:—

> "Arabian fiction never filled the world
> With half the wonders that were wrought for him.
> Earth breathed in one great presence of the spring;
> Life turned the meanest of her implements
> Before his eyes to price above all gold;
> The house she dwelt in was a sainted shrine;
> Her chamber window did surpass in glory
> The portal of the dawn; all paradise
> Could, by the simple opening of a door,
> Let itself in upon him; pathways, walks,
> Swarmed with enchantment, till his spirit sank,
> Surcharged, within him, overblest to move
> Beneath a sun that walks a weary world
> To its dull round of ordinary cares;
> A man too happy for mortality."

Perhaps the highest instance of Wordsworth's imaginative faculty, exerted in a tale of human fortunes, is to be found in "The White Doe of Rylstone." He has here succeeded in two distinct efforts, the results of which are yet in entire harmony. He has shown the gentle spirit of a high-born maiden gathering strength and purity from sorrow, and finally, after the destruction of her family, and amidst the ruin of her paternal domains, consecrated by suffering. He has also here, by the introduction of that lovely wonder, the favourite doe of his heroine, at once linked the period of his narrative to that of its events, and softened down the saddest catastrophe and the most exquisite of mortal agonies. A gallant chieftain, one of the goodliest pillars of the olden time, falls, with eight of his sons, in a hopeless contest for the religion to which they were devoted—the ninth, who followed them unarmed, is slain while he strives to bear away, for their sake, the banner which he had abjured—the sole survivor, a helpless woman, is left to wander desolate about the silent halls and tangled glades, once witnesses of her joyous infancy—and yet all this variety of grief is rendered mild and soothing by the influences of the imagination of the poet. The doe, which first with its quiet sympathy excited relieving tears in its forsaken mistress, which followed her, a gentle companion, through all her mortal wanderings, and which years after made Sabbath visits to her grave, is, like the spirit of nature, personified to heal, to bless, and to elevate. All who have read the poem aright, will feel prepared for that apotheosis which the poet has reserved for this radiant being, and will recognise the imaginative truth of that bold figure, by which the decaying towers of Bolton are made to smile upon its form, and to attest its unearthly relations:—

"There doth the gentle creature lie
With these adversities unmoved;
Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
In their benignity approved!
And ay, methinks, this hoary pile,
Subdued by outrage and decay,
Looks down upon her with a smile,
A gracious smile, that seems to say,
'Thou art not a Child of Time,
But daughter of the eternal Prime!'"

Although Wordsworth chiefly delights in these humanities of poetry, he has shown that he possesses feelings to appreciate and power to grasp the noblest of classic fictions. No one can read his Dion, his Loadamia, and the most majestic of his sonnets, without perceiving that he has power to endow the stateliest shapes of old mythology with new life, and to diffuse about them a new glory. Hear him, for example, breaking forth, with holy disdain of the worldly spirit of the time, into this sublime apostrophy:—

"Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn:
So might I, standing on some pleasant lee,
Have glimpses which might make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn!"

But he has chosen rather to survey the majesties of Greece, with the eye of a philosopher as well as of a poet. He reviews them with emotions equally remote from pedantry and from intolerance—regarding not only the grace and the loveliness of their forms, but their symbolical meaning—tracing them to their elements in the human soul, and bringing before us the eldest wisdom which was imbodied in their shapes, and speedily forgotten by their worshippers. Thus, among "the palpable array of sense," does he discover hints of immortal life—thus does he transport us back more than twenty centuries—and enable us to enter into the most mysterious and far-reaching hopes of a Grecian votary:—

"——A *Spirit* hung,
Beautiful region! o'er thy Towns and Farms,
Statues, and Temples, and memorial Tombs;
And emanations were perceived, and acts
Of immortality, in Nature's course,
Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt
As bonds, on grave Philosopher imposed
And armed Warrior; and in every grove,
A gay or pensive tenderness prevail'd
When piety more awful had relaxed.
'Take, running River, take these locks of mine,'
Thus would the votary say,—'this sever'd hair,
My vow fulfilling, do I here present,
Thankful for my beloved child's return.
Thy banks, Cephisus, he again hath trod,
Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the crystal lymph
With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,
And moisten all day long these flowery fields.'
And doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose
Of life continuous, Being unimpair'd
That hath been, is, and where it was and is
There shall be,—seen, and heard, and felt, and known,
And recognised,—existence unexposed
To the blind walk of mortal accident;
From diminution free, and weakening age,
While man grows old, and dwindles and decays;
And countless generations of mankind
Depart: and leave no vestige where they trod."

We must now bring this long article to a close—and yet how small a portion of our author's beauties have we even hinted! We have passed over the clear majesty of the poem of "Hart Leap Well"—the lyrical grandeur of the Feast of Brougham Castle—the masculine energy and delicate grace of the Sonnets which, with the exception perhaps of one or two of Warton and of Milton, far exceed all others in our language—"The Wagoner," that fine and hearty concession of a water-drinker to the joys of wine and the light-hearted folly which it inspires—and numbers of smaller poems and ballads, which to the superficial observer may seem only like woodland springs, but in which he who ponders intently will discern the breakings forth of an under-current of thought and feeling which is silently flowing beneath him. We trust, however, we have written or rather quoted enough to induce such of our readers as hitherto have despised the poet on the faith of base or ignorant criticism to read him for themselves, especially as by the recent appearance of the Excursion in octavo, and the arrangement of the minor poems in four small volumes, the whole of his poetical works are placed within their reach. If he has little popularity with the multitude, he is rewarded by the intense veneration and love of the finest spirits of the age. Not only

Coleridge, Lloyd, Southey, Wilson, and Lamb—with whom his name has been usually connected—but almost all the living poets have paid eloquent homage to his genius. He is loved by Montgomery, Cornwall, and Rogers—revered by the author of Waverley—ridiculed and pillaged by Lord Byron! Jeffrey, if he begins an article on his greatest work with the pithy sentence "*this will never do*," glows even while he criticises, and before he closes, though he came like Balaam to curse, like him "blesses altogether." Innumerable essays, sermons, speeches, poems—even of those who profess to despise him—are tinged by his fancy and adorned by his expressions. And there are no small number of young hearts, which have not only been enriched but renovated by his poetry—which he has expanded, purified, and exalted—and to which he has given the means of high communion with the good and the pure throughout the universe. These, equal at least in number to the original lovers of Shakspeare or of Milton, will transmit his fame to kindred spirits, and whether it shall receive or be denied the honour of fashion, it will ever be cherished by the purest of earthly minds, and connected with the most majestic of nature's scenery.

Too many of our living poets have seemed to take pride in building their fame on the sands. They have chosen for their subjects the disease of the heart—the sad anomalies of humanity—the turbulent and guilty passions which are but for a season. Their renown, therefore, must necessarily decline as the species advances. Instead of tracing out the lineaments of the image of God indelibly impressed on the soul, they have painted the deformities which may obscure them for awhile, but can never utterly destroy them. Vice, which is the accident of our nature, has been their theme instead of those affections which are its groundwork and essence. "Yet a little space, and that which men call evil is no more!" Yet a little space, and those wild emotions—those horrid deeds—those strange aberrations of the soul—on which some gifted bards have delighted to dwell, will fade away like the phantoms of a feverish dream. Then will poetry, like that of Wordsworth, which even now is the harbinger of a serener day, be felt and loved and held in undying honour. The genius of a poet who has chosen this high and pure career, too, will proceed in every stage of being, seeing that "it is a thing immortal as himself," and that it was ever inspired by affections which cannot die. The poet even in brighter worlds will feel, with inconceivable delight, the connection between his earthly and celestial being—live along the golden lines of sentiment and thought back to the most delicious moments of his contemplations here—and rejoice in the recognition of those joys of which he had tastes and intimations on earth. Then shall he see the inmost soul of his poetry disclosed—grasp as assured realities the gorgeous visions of his infancy—feel "the burden of the mystery of all this unimaginable world," which were lightened to him here, dissolved away—see the prophetic workings of his imagination realized—exult while "pain and anguish and the wormy grave," which here were to him "shapes of a dream," are utterly banished from the view—and listen to the full chorus of that universal harmony whose first notes he here delighted to awaken!

REVIEW OF "NORTH'S LIFE OF LORD GUILFORD."

[Retrospective Review.]

This old piece of legal biography, which has been lately republished, is one of the most delightful books in the world. Its charm does not consist in any marvellous incidents of Lord Guilford's life, or any peculiar interest attaching to his character, but in the unequalled naiveté of the writer—in the singular felicity with which he has thrown himself into his subject—and his vivid delineations of all the great lawyers of his time. He was a younger brother of the Lord Keeper, to whose affection he was largely indebted, and from whom he appears to have been scarcely ever divided. His work, in nice minuteness of detail, and living picture of motive, almost equals the auto-biographies of Benevento Cellini, Rousseau, and Cibber. He seems to be almost as intensely conscious of all his brother's actions, and the movements of his mind, as they were of their own. All his ideas of human greatness and excellence appear taken from the man whom he celebrates. There never was a more liberal or gentle prostration of the spirit. He was evidently the most humane, the most kindly, and the most single-hearted, of flatterers. There is a beauty in his very cringing, beyond the independence of many. It is the most gentleman-like submission, the most graceful resignation of self of which we have ever read. Hence, there is nothing of the vanity of authorship—no attempt to display his own powers—throughout the work. He never comes forward in the first person, except as a witness. Indeed, he usually speaks of himself as of another, as though he had half lost his personal consciousness in the contemplation of his idol's virtues. The following passage, towards the conclusion, where he recounts the favours of Lord Guilford to a younger brother, and at last, in the fulness of his heart, discloses, by a little quotation, that he is speaking of himself—this breaking from his usual modest narration into the only personal feeling he seems to have cherished—is beautifully characteristic of the spirit which he brought to his work.

"But I ought to come nearer home, and take an account of his benevolences to his paternal relations. His youngest brother (the honourable Roger North) was designed, by his father, for the civil law, as they call that professed at Doctors' Commons, upon a specious fancy to have a son of each faculty or employ used in England. But his lordship dissuaded him, and advised rather to have him put to the common law; for the other profession provided but for a few, and those not wonderful well; whereas, the common law was more certain, and, in that way, he himself might bring him forwards, and assist him. And so it was determined. His lordship procured for him a petit chamber, which cost his father £60, and there he was settled with a very scanty allowance; to which his lordship made a timely addition of his own money: more than all this, he took him almost constantly out with him to company and entertainments, and always paid his scot; and, when he was attorney general, let him into partnership in one of the offices under him; and when his lordship was treasurer, and his brother called to the bar, a perquisite chamber, worth £150, fell; and that he gave to his brother for a practising chamber, and took in lieu only that which he had used for his studies. When his lordship was chief justice, he gave him the countenance of practising under him, at *nisi prius;* and all the while his lordship was a house-keeper, his brother and servant were of his family at all meals. When the Temple was burnt, he fitted up a little room and study in his chambers in Serjeant's Inn, for his brother to manage his small affairs of law in, and lodged him in his house till the Temple was built, and he might securely lodge there. And his lordship was pleased with a back door in his own study, by which he could go in and out to his brother, to discourse of incidents; which way of life delighted his lordship exceedingly. And, what was more extraordinary, he went with his lordship in his coach constantly, to, and from, the courts of *nisi prius*, at Guildhall and Westminster. And, after his lordship had the great seal, his brother's practice (being then made of the king's counsel, and coming within the bar) increased exceedingly, and, in about three years' time he acquired the better part he afterwards was possessed of. At that time, his lordship took his brother into his family, and a coach and servants assigned him out of his equipages; and all at rack and manger, requiring only £200 a year; which was a trifle, as the world went then. And it may truly be said, that this brother was a shadow to him, as if they had grown together. And, to show his lordship's tenderness, I add this instance of fact. Once he seemed more than ordinarily disposed to pensiveness, even to a degree of melancholy. His lordship never left pumping, till he found out the cause of it; and that was a reflection what should become of him, if he should lose this good brother, and be left alone to himself: the thought of which he could scarce bear; for he had no opinion of his own strength, to work his way through the world with tolerable success. Upon this his lordship, to set his brother's mind at ease, sold him an annuity of £200 a year, at an easy rate, upon condition to re-purchase it, at the same rate, when he was worth £5000. And this was all done accordingly.

"O et præsidium et dulce decus meum."

We will now conduct our readers through Lord Guilford's life—introducing as many of the nice peculiarities of his historian as our limits will allow—and will then give them one or two of the portraits with which the work is enriched—and add a word on the changes which have taken place in the legal profession, since the time when the originals "held the noisy tenour of their way" through its gradations.

The Hon. Francis North, afterwards Baron Guilford, was the third son of Dudley, Lord North, Baron of Kirtling, who deserved the filial duty of his children, by the veneration which he manifested towards his own father, beyond even the strictness of those times; for, though he was an old man before his father died, he never sat or was covered in his presence unbidden. He sent his son, at an early age, to school, but was not very fortunate in his selection, for the master was a rigid Presbyterian, and his wife a furious Independent, who used "to instruct her babes in the gift of praying by the spirit, making them kneel by a bedside and pray;" but as "this petit spark was too small for that posture, he was set upon the bed to kneel with his face to the pillow." This absurd treatment seems to have given the child an early disgust for those who were esteemed the fanatics, which never left him. He finished his scholastic education under a "cavalier master," with credit. After he left school, he became a fellow-commoner of St. John's College, Cambridge, where he improved greatly in solid learning, and acquired a knowledge of music, which he afterwards used as a frequent solace amidst the toils of his profession.

He next became a member of the Middle Temple, and occupied "a moiety of a petit chamber, which his father bought for him." Here he "used constantly commons in the hall at noons and nights," studied closely, and derived much benefit from the practice of putting cases, which was followed in the old temple cloisters by the students, and for the convenience of which they were rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren in their present form. He, also, diligently common-placed the substance of his reading, having acquired a very small but legible hand—"for," as his biographer observes, "where contracting is the main business, it is not well to write, as the fashion then was, uncial or semi-uncial letters to look like pig's ribs." In his studies, he was wont by turns to read the reports and institutes; "as, after a fulness of the reports in a morning, about noon, to take a repast in Stamford, Crompton, or the Lord Coke's Pleas of the Crown, and Jurisdiction of Courts, Manwood of the Forest Law, and Fitzherbert's Natura Brevium." He, also, "despatched the greatest part" of the year-books, beginning with the book termed *Henry the Seventh*, from whence he regarded the common law derived "as from a copious fountain." While thus engaged, he did not altogether refuse recreation, but delighted in a small supper and a temperate glass with his friends in chambers, sometimes fancied "to go about town and see trade-work, which is a very diverting and instructive entertainment," and visited every thing extraordinary in town, "as engines, shows, lectures, and even so low as to hear Hugh Peters preach!" The only obstacle to his legal success was his excessive bashfulness, which so oppressed him, that when he dined or supped in the hall of the Middle Temple, he would not walk in alone, but "used to stand dogging at the skreen till other company came, behind whom he might enter."

At the bar, he derived great advantage from the favour of Sir Jeofry Palmer, the attorney-general, who gave him many opportunities of showing his dexterity and knowledge of law, by procuring him to perform some of his own public duties, when he was himself disabled by sickness. Through the good offices of this zealous friend, Mr. North was appointed to argue for the king in the House of Lords, on the writ of error in the famous case of the King *v.* Hollis and others, which was brought, by order of the House of Commons, to reverse a judgment obtained in the time of Charles the First, against five of their members, who had been prosecuted for holding down the speaker in his chair, and other riotous proceedings. In consequence of the ability which he displayed on this occasion, though the commons succeeded, he was, on the recommendation of the Duke of York, appointed one of his majesty's counsel. Thus, having precedence, the favour of the court, great assiduity, and knowledge in law, he soon considerably extended his practice. To this, indeed, his great wariness and prudence, trenching on the boundaries of meanness, did not contribute a little. "He was exceedingly careful to keep fair with the cocks of the circuit," especially Serjeant Earl, who was a miser, and with whom he was contented to travel, when no other would starve with him on his journeys. If he discovered a point which his leader had omitted, he would not excite dislike by moving it himself, but suggest it to his senior, and thus conciliate his regard. He was, also, to use the words of his biographer, "a wonderful artist in nicking a judge's tendency to serve his turn, and yet never failed to pay the greatest regard and deference to his opinion." He never contested a point with a judge when he despaired to convince him, but resigned it, even when confident in its goodness, that he might not weaken his credit for the future. On the other hand, when the judge was wrongly on his side, and he knew it, he did not fail to echo, "*ay, my lord*," to the great annoyance of his rivals. Thus gifted by knowledge and pliancy, he soon "from an humble beginner rejoicing at a cause that came to him, became cock of the circuit; and every one that had a trial rejoiced to have him on his side." One piece of artifice which he used on behalf of a relative is so curious, that we will insert it in the words of our author.

"His lordship had a relation, one Mr. Whitmore, of Balms, near London, an humoursome old gentleman, but very famous for the mere eating and drinking part of house-keeping. He was owner of Waterbeach, near Cambridge, and took a fancy that his estate ought not to pay tithes, and ordered his tenants expressly to pay none, with promise to defend them. The parson had no more to do but to go to law, and by advice brought an action of debt, for treble damages upon the statute against subtraction of tithes. The tenants got the whole demand to be put in one action; and that stood for trial at the assizes. Then he consults his cousin North, and retains him to defend this cause; but shows him no manner of title to a discharge. So he could but tell him he would be routed, and pay treble value of the tithes, and that he must make an end. This signified nothing to one that was abandoned to his own testy humour. The cause came on, and his lordship's utmost endeavour was to fetch him off with the single value and costs; and that point he managed very artificially: for first, he considered that Archer was the judge, and it was always agreeable to him to stave off a long cause. After the cause was opened, his lordship, for the defendant, stepped forward, and told the judge that 'this would be a long and intricate cause, being a title to a discharge of tithes, which would require the reading a long series of records and ancient writings. That his client was no quaker, to deny payments of tithes were due, in which case the treble value was by the law intended as a sort of penalty. But this was to be a trial of a title, which his client was advised he had to a discharge: therefore he moved, that the single value might be settled; and if the cause went for the plaintiff, he should have that and his costs (which costs, it seems, did not go if the treble value was recovered,) and then they would proceed to their title.' The other side mutinied against this imposition of Mr. North, but the judge was for him, and they must be satisfied. Then did he open a long history of matters upon record, of bulls, monasteries, orders, greater and lesser houses, surrenders, patents, and a great deal more, very proper, if it had been true, while the counsel on the other side stared at him; and, having done, they bid him go to his evidence. He leaned back, as speaking to the attorney, and then, *My lord*, said he, *we are very unhappy in this cause. The attorney tells me, they forgot to examine their copies with the originals at the Tower;* and (so folding up his brief) *My lord*, said he, *they must have the verdict, and we must come better prepared another time.* So, notwithstanding all the mutiny the other side could make, the judge held them to it, and they were choused of the treble value. This was no iniquity, because it was not to defraud the duty, but to shift off the penalty. But the old gentleman told his cousin North, he had given away his cause. His lordship thought he had done him service enough; and could but just (with the help of the before said reason) satisfy himself that he had not done ill."

There is nothing very worthy of remark in the private life of Mr. North, before the beginning of his speculations for a settlement by marriage. These are exceedingly curious, not for their romance, but the want of it. In the good old times, when our advocate flourished, the language of sentiment was not in fashion. Some doubtless there were, perhaps not fewer than in these poetical days, in whose souls Love held its "high and hearted seat"—whose nice-attuned spirits trembled with every change of the intensest, yet most delicate of affections—whose whole existence was one fervent hope and one unbroken sigh. Since then, the breathings of their deep emotion—the words and phases which imperfectly indicated that which was passing within them, as light and airy bubbles rise up from the lowest spring to the surface of tranquil waters—have become the current language of every transitory passion, and serve to garnish out every prudent match as a necessary part of the wedding finery. Things were not thus confounded by our heartier ancestors. Language was some indication of the difference of minds, as dress was of ranks. The choice spirits of the time had their prerogative of words and figures, as the ancient families had of their coats of arms. The greater part of mankind, who never feel love in its depth or its purity, were contented to marry and be given in marriage without the affectation of its language. Men avowedly looked for good portions, and women for suitable jointures—they made the contract for mutual support and domestic comfort in good faith, and did not often break it. They had their reward. They indulged no fairy dreams of happiness too etherial for earth, which, when dissipated, would render dreary the level path of existence. Of their open, plain-hearted course of entering into the matrimonial state, and of speaking about it, the Lord Keeper and his biographer are edifying examples. His Lordship, as his fortune improved, felt the necessity of domestic comfort, and wisely thought his hours of leisure would be spent most happily in a family, "which is never well settled without a mistress." "He fancied," says his eulogist, "he might pretend to as good a fortune in a match as many others had found, who had less reason to expect it; but without some advantage that way, he was not disposed to engage himself." His first attempt in this laudable pursuit was to obtain the daughter of an old usurer, which we will give in our author's words:

"There came to him a recommendation of a lady, who was an only daughter of an old usurer of Gray's-inn, supposed to be a good fortune in present, for her father was rich; but after his death, to become worth nobody could tell what. His lordship got a sight of the lady, and did not dislike her; thereupon he made the old man a visit, and a proposal of himself to marry his daughter. There appeared no symptoms of discouragement; but only the old gentleman asked him what estate his father intended to settle upon him for present maintenance, jointure, and provision for children. This was an inauspicious question; for it was plain that the family had not estate enough for a lordship, and none would be to spare for him. Therefore he said to his worship only, *That when he would be pleased to declare what portion he intended to give his daughter, he would write to his father, and make him acquainted with his answer.* And so they parted, and his lordship was glad of his escape, and resolved to give that affair a final discharge, and never to come near the terrible old fellow any more. His lordship had, at that time, a stout heart, and could not digest the being so slighted; as if, in his present state, a profitable profession, and future hopes, were of no account. If he had had a real estate to settle, he should not have stooped so low as to match with his daughter: and thenceforward despised his alliance."

His next enterprise was directed to the "flourishing widow" of Mr. Edward Palmer, who had been his most intimate friend. Her family favoured his addresses—the lady did not refuse him—but flirted, coquetted, and worried him, until he was heartily tired of being "held in a course of bo-peep play by a crafty widow." Her friends still urged him to persevere, which he did to please them rather than himself, until she relieved him by marrying another of her suitors. His third exploit is thus amusingly related.

"Another proposition came to his lordship, by a city broker, from Sir John Lawrence, who had many daughters, and those reputed beauties; and the fortune was to be £6000. His lordship went and dined with the alderman, and liked the lady, who (as the way is) was dressed out for a muster. And coming to treat, the portion shrank to £5000, and, upon that, his lordship parted, and was not gone far before Mr. Broker (following) came to him and said, Sir John would give £500 more, at the birth of the first child; but that would not do, for his lordship hated such screwing. Not long after this despatch, his lordship was made the king's solicitor general, and then the broker came again, with news that Sir John would give £10,000. No; his lordship said, *after such usage he would not proceed, if he might have* £20,000. So ended that affair; and his lordship's mind was once more settled in tranquillity."

At last, after these repeated disappointments, his mother "laid her eyes" on the Lady Frances Pope, one of three co-heiresses, as a wife for her son—and with his consent made overtures on his behalf. After some little difficulties respecting his lordship's fortune, this match was happily concluded, and is celebrated by his biographer as "made in heaven." The lady, however, died of a consumption, in the prime of her days. On this occasion, our author rejoices that "his lordship's good stars" forced him to London about a fortnight before her death, because nearness to persons dying of consumptions is perilous—and "when she must expire, and probably in his arms, he might have received great damage in his health." Her husband erected a monument to her memory, on which a tremendous Latin epitaph was engraven, commemorating her father, husband, children and virtues. Our author here expresses his opinion, that the eulogistic part should be left out, "because it is in the power of every cobbler to do the like;" but that the account of families cannot be too far extended, because they may be useful as evidence of pedigree. This is a curious self-betrayal, by a man of rank and family. The utility of monumental inscriptions, detailing the dignities of ancestry, is, indeed urged—but it is easy to perceive the antithesis completed in the writer's mind—between all the virtues which a cobbler might share, and the immunities of which the high-born alone are partakers.

Meanwhile, his lordship proceeded to honour and fortune. He was made solicitor-general, became a candidate for the borough of Lynn Regis; and, on a visit, with his accustomed prudence, "regaled the corporation with a very handsome treat, which cost him about one hundred pounds." He could not, however, be present at the election, but sent our author, and Mr. Matthew Johnson, "to ride for him," with proper directions to economize their pecuniary resources. They did so;—"took but one house, and there allowed scope for all taps to run;" and as there was no opposition, all passed well, and "the plenipos returned with their purchase, the return of the election, back to London." His lordship, however, lost his seat by the vote of the House—despatched "his plenipos once more to regain it, which they did, though with more difficulty than they first procured it; for Sir Simon Taylor, a wealthy merchant of wine, in that town, stood, and had procured a butt of sherry, which butt of sherry was a potent adversary." Soon after, his lordship was made attorney-general, and some doubts arose as to his right to sit in parliament; which, however, he was able to remove.

In due time, Mr. North, wearied with the perpetual labours of extensive practice, not only in the courts of law but of equity, longed for, and obtained, the elevated repose of the cushion of the Court of Common Pleas. Here he sedulously endeavoured to resist the encroachments of the King's Bench, and showed himself sufficiently versed in the arts by which each of the courts attempted to overreach the other, and which would have done credit to the sagacity of a solicitor at the Old Bailey. His biographer relates various instances of his skill in detecting falsehood, which do not quite entitle him to be regarded as a second Solomon—of his management of counsel, which we have seen excelled in no distant period—and of his repartees, which are the worst ever gravely told as good things by a devoted admirer. The story of "the dumb day" is, however, worth transcribing, especially as our author, though he speaks of himself as usual, in the third person, was the party on whose behalf the authority of the chief justice was exerted.

"It hath been the usage of the King's Bench, at the side bar below in the hall, and of the Common Pleas, in the chamber within the treasury, to hear attorneys, and young counsel, that came to move them about matters of form and practice. His lordship had a younger brother (Hon. Roger North) who was of the profession of the law. He was newly called to the bar, and had little to do in the King's Bench; but the attorneys of the Common Pleas often retained him to move for them in the treasury, such matters as were proper there, and what they might have moved themselves. But however agreeable this kind of practice was to a novitiate, it was not worthy the observation it had; for once or twice a week was the utmost calculate of these motions. But the sergeants thought that method was, or might become, prejudicial to them, who had a monopoly of the bar, and would have no *water go by their mill*, and supposed it was high time to put a stop to such beginnings, for fear it might grow worse. But the doubt was, how they should signify their resentment, so as to be effectually remedial. At length they agreed, for one day, to make no motions at all; and opportunity would fall for showing the reason how the court came to have no business. When the court (on this dumb day, as it was called) was sat, the chief justice gave the usual signal to the eldest sergeant to move. He bowed, and had nothing to move: so the next, and the next, from end to end of the bar. The chief, seeing this, said, *Brothers, I think we must rise; here is no business.* Then an attorney steps forward, and called to a sergeant to make his motion; and, after that, turned to the court and said, that he had given the sergeant his fee, and instructions over night, to move for him, and desired he might do it. But profound silence still. The chief looked about, and asked, *What was the matter?* An attorney, that stood by, very modestly said, *that he feared the sergeants took it ill that motions were made in the Treasury.* Then the chief scented the whole matter; and, *Brothers*, said he, *I think a very great affront is offered to us, which we ought, for the dignity of the court, to resent. But that we may do nothing too suddenly, but take consideration at full leisure, and maturely, let us now rise, and to-morrow morning give order as becomes us. And do you attorneys come all here to-morrow, and care shall be taken for your despatch, and, rather than fail, we will hear you, or your clients, or the barristers at law, or any person that thinks fit to appear in business, that the law may have its course;* and so the court rose. This was like thunder to the sergeants, and they fell to quarrelling, one with another about being the cause of this great evil they had brought upon themselves: for none of them imagined it would have had such a turn as this was, that shaked what was the palladium of the coif, the sole practice there. In the afternoon, they attended the chief, and the other judges of the court, and, in great humility, owned their fault, and begged pardon, and that no farther notice might be taken of it; and they would be careful not to give the like offence for the future. The chief told them, that the affront was in public, and in the face of the court, and they must make their recognitions there next morning, and in such a manner as the greatness of their offence demanded; and then they should hear what the court would say to them. Accordingly they did; and the chief first, and, then, the rest, in order, gave them a formal chiding with acrimony enough; all which, with dejected countenances, they were bound to hear. When this discipline was over, the chief pointed to one to move; which he did, (as they said,) more like one crying than speaking; and so ended the comedy, as it was acted in Westminster-hall, called the dumb day."

His lordship used his travels on the circuit as the means of securing an interest in the country gentlemen; and with so much success, that Dr. Mew, Bishop of Winchester, who was called Patels, from a black plaster which he wore to cover a wound received in the civil war, termed him "deliciæ occidentis," the darling of the West; and the western members of parliament "did so firmly ensconce him that his enemies could never get a clever stroke at him." Once, indeed, he was taken in by a busy fanatic, who importuned the judges to sup with him, at his house near Exeter; and, having them fairly in his power, inflicted on them a long extemporaneous prayer, "after the Presbyterian way," which gave occasion to much merriment at the expense of their lordships, who were said to have been at a conventicle, and in danger of being presented with all their retinue for that offence by the grand jury. He also narrowly escaped being made the dupe or tool of the infamous Bedloe, who sent for him under pretence of making a confession. Excepting in so far as an excessive timidity influenced him, he appears to have acted in his high office with exemplary justice and wisdom. He was, indeed, a most faint-hearted judge, which his biographer, as in duty bound, discloses to his honour. He dreaded the trying of a witch, because he disbelieved the crime: and yet feared to offend the superstitious vulgar. On this nice subject, our author observes—

"It is seldom that a poor old wretch is brought to trial upon that account, but there is, at the heels of her, a popular rage that does little less than demand her to be put to death: and, if a judge is so clear and open as to declare against *that impious vulgar opinion*, that the devil himself has power to torment and kill innocent children, or that he is pleased to divert himself with the good people's cheese, butter, pigs, and geese, and the like errors of the ignorant and foolish rabble; the countrymen (the triers) cry this judge hath no religion, for he doth not believe witches; and so, to show they have some, hang the poor wretches. All which tendency to mistake, requires a very prudent and moderate carriage in a judge, whereby to convince, rather by detecting of the fraud, than by denying authoritatively such power to be given to old women."

His lordship did, indeed, whenever he could, lay open the imposture, and procure the acquittal of witches. But when Mr. Justice Raymond and he went the circuit together, and his co-judge condemned two women to death for the crime, he appears to have contented himself, "with concern, that his brother Raymond's passive behaviour should let them die," without himself making any effort to save them. His opinions respecting libels were surprisingly liberal for a judge of the cavalier party, and may serve to put shame to the courtly lawyers of more enlightened days.

"As to the business of lies and libels, which, in those days, were an intolerable vexation to the court, especially finding that the community of gentle and simple strangely ran in with them; it was moved that there should be more messengers of the press, and spies, who should discover secret printing-houses, (which, then, were against law,) and take up the hawkers that sold libels, and all other persons that dispersed them, and inflict severe punishments on all that were found guilty. But his lordship was of a very different opinion, and said that this prosecution would make them but the more inquired after; and it was impossible to hinder the promulgation of libels; for the greediness of every one to get them, and the high price, would make men, of desperate fortunes, venture any thing: and, in such cases, punishments never regulate the abuse; but it must be done, if at all, by methods undermining the encouragement: yet, if any were caught, he thought it was fit to make severe examples of them. But an extraordinary inquisition to be set up, and make so much noise, and the punishment falling, as was most likely, not on the authors and abettors, but some poor wretches that sought to get a penny by selling them, would, as he thought, rather incense than abate the abuse. His notion was, that his majesty should order nothing extraordinary, to make people imagine he was touched to the quick; but to set up counter writers that as every libel came out should take it to task, and answer it. And, so, all the diurnal lies of the town also would be met with: *for* said he, *either we are in the wrong, or in the right; if the former, we must do as usurped powers, use force, and crush all our enemies right or wrong. But there is no need of that, for we are in the right; for who will pretend not to own his majesty's authority according to law? And nothing is done, by his majesty and his ministers, but what the law will warrant, and what should we be afraid of? Let them lie and accuse till they are weary, while we declare at the same time, as may be done with demonstration, that all they say is false and unjust; and the better sort of the people whom truth sways, when laid before them, will be with us.* This counsel was followed; and some clever writers were employed, such as were called the Observator and Heraclitus, for a constancy, and others, with them, occasionally; and then they soon wrote the libellers out of the pit, and during that king's life, the trade of libels, which before had been in great request, fell to nothing."

Mr. North, notwithstanding the liberality of some of his opinions, was made a privy counsellor, and some time after Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. He opposed Jeffries, the celebrated Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, with mildness and caution, and secured and used wisely the esteem of his sovereign. He appears to have foreseen, that the consequence of the violent and arbitrary measures, which he was unable to prevent, would, if continued, work the downfall of the Stuart family. His private life was temperate and regular, untainted with the vices of the times. His brother-in-law, actually fearing his virtue might be visited as a libel on the court, seriously advised him to keep a mistress in his own defence; "for he understood, from very great men, that he was ill looked upon for want of doing so; because he seemed continually to reprehend them;" which notable advice was concluded by an offer, "that, if his lordship pleased, he would help him to one." His lordship's regard to virtue, as well as his usual caution, which told him, "there was no spy like a female," made him regard this proffer with a scorn, which utterly puzzled his adviser. He was, however, tremulously alive to ridicule. Aware of this infirmity, Jeffries and the Earl of Sunderland took advantage of a harmless visit he made to see a rhinoceros, to circulate a report that he had ridden on the animal. This threw him into a state of rage and vexation truly surprising; he turned on his questioners with unexampled fury, was seriously angry with Sir Dudley North for not contradicting it with sufficient gravity, and sent for him that he might add his testimony to his own solemn denial. His biographer, who actually performs the duty of confidante, as described in *The Critic*, to laugh, weep, or go mad with the principal, is also in a towering passion at the charge. He calls it, "an impudent buffoon lie, which Satan himself would not have owned for his legitimate issue;" and is provoked beyond measure, that "the noble Earl, with Jeffries, and others of that crew, made merry, and never blushed at the lie of their own making; but valued themselves upon it, as a very good jest." He was afflicted by no *other* "great calumny," notwithstanding the watchfulness of his foes. One of his last public acts was to stop the bloody proceedings of Jeffries in the West, which he did by his influence with the king. He did not long survive the profligate prince, whom he sometimes was able to guide and to soften. He walked in the coronation of James the Second, when imperfectly recovered from a fever; and, after a gradual decline of some months, expired at his house at Wroxton, really hurried to the grave by the political broils and vexations attendant on the Great Seal. "That pestiferous lump of metal," as our author terms it, was given to Jeffries, whom it did not save from an end more disastrous and fearful.

The work before us, as we have already intimated, is rendered more interesting by the admirable characters which it contains of the old lawyers. These are all drawn, not only with great and most felicitous distinctness, but are touched in a mild, gentlemanly, and humane spirit, which it is refreshing to recognise in these days of acrimony and slander. Even those who were most opposed in interest and in prejudice to the author, receive ample justice from his hands. Hale, whose dislike to the court rendered him obnoxious to the author, or, which is the same thing, to his brother, is drawn at full length in all his austere majesty. Even Serjeant Maynard, the acknowledged "anti-restoration lawyer," whose praise was in all the conventicles, and who was a hard rival of "his lordship," receives due acknowledgment of his learning, and that he was, to his last breath, true as steel to the principles of the times when he began his career. Sir William Scraggs, the fierce voluptuary and outrageous politician, is softened to us by the single engaging touch, that "in his house every day was a holyday." And Jeffries himself, as exhibited here, seems to have had something of real human warmth within him, which redeems him from utter hatred. The following is a summary of his character.

"His friendship and conversation lay much among the good fellows and humourists; and his delights were, accordingly, *drinking, laughing, singing, kissing*, and all the extravagancies of the bottle. He had a set of banterers, for the most part, near him; as, in old time, great men kept fools to make them merry. And these fellows, abusing one another and their betters, were a regale to him. And no friendship or dearness could be so great, in private, which he would not use ill, and to an extravagant degree, in public. No one, that had any expectations from him, was safe from his public contempt and derision, which some of his minions at the bar bitterly felt. Those above, or that could hurt or benefit him, and none else, might depend on fair quarters at his hands. *When he was in temper, and matters indifferent came before him, he became his seat of justice better than any other I ever saw in his place.* He took a pleasure in mortifying fraudulent attorneys, and would deal forth his severities with a sort of majesty. He had extraordinary natural abilities, but little acquired, beyond what practice in affairs had supplied. He talked fluently, and with spirit; and his weakness was that he could not reprehend without scolding; and in such Billingsgate language, as should not come out of the mouth of any man. He called it *giving a lick with the rough side of his tongue.* It was ordinary to hear him say, *Go, you are a filthy, lousy, nitty rascal;* with much more of like elegance. Scarce a day passed that he did not chide some one, or other, of the bar, when he sat in the Chancery; and it was commonly a lecture of a quarter of an hour long. And they used to say, *This is yours; my turn will be to-morrow.* He seemed to lay nothing of his business to heart, nor care what he did, or left undone; and spent, in the Chancery court, what time he thought fit to spare. Many times, on days of causes at his house, the company have waited five hours in a morning, and, after eleven, he hath come out inflamed and staring like one distracted. And that visage he put on when he animadverted on such as he took offence at, which made him a terror to real offenders; whom also he terrified with his face and voice, as *if the thunder of the day of judgment broke over their heads:* and nothing ever made men tremble like his vocal inflictions. He loved to insult, and was bold without check; but that only when his place was uppermost. To give an instance. A city attorney was petitioned against for some abuse; and affidavit was made that when he was told of my lord chancellor, *My lord chancellor*, said he, *I made him;* meaning his being a means to bring him early into city business. When this affidavit was read, *Well*, said the lord chancellor, *then I will lay my maker by the heels.* And, with that conceit, one of his best old friends went to jail. One of these intemperances was fatal to him. There was a scrivener of Wapping brought to hearing for relief against a bummery bond; the contingency of losing all being showed, the bill was going to be dismissed. But one of the plaintiff's counsel said that he was a strange fellow, and sometimes went to church, sometimes to conventicles; and none could tell what to make of him; and *it was thought he was a trimmer.* At that the chancellor fired; and, *A trimmer!* said he; *I have heard much of that monster, but never saw one. Come forth, Mr. Trimmer, turn you round, and let us see your shape:* and, at that rate, talked so long that the poor fellow was ready to drop under him; but, at last the bill was dismissed with costs, and he went his way. In the hall, one of his friends asked him how he came off? *Came off*, said he, *I am escaped from the terrors of that man's face, which I would scarce undergo again to save my life; I shall certainly have the frightful impression of it as long as I live.* Afterwards, when the Prince of Orange came, and all was in confusion, this lord chancellor, being very obnoxious, disguised himself in order to go beyond sea. He was in a seaman's garb, and drinking a pot in a cellar. This scrivener came into the cellar after some of his clients: and his eye caught that face, which made him start; and the chancellor seeing himself eyed, feigned a cough, and turned to the wall with his pot in his hand. But *Mr. Trimmer* went out, and gave notice that he was there; whereupon the mob flowed in, and he was in extreme hazard of his life; but the lord mayor saved him and lost himself. For the chancellor being hurried with such crowd and noise before him, and appearing so dismally, not only disguised, but disordered; and there having been an amity between them, as also a veneration on the lord mayor's part, he had not spirits to sustain the shock, but fell down in a swoon; and, in not many hours after, died. But this Lord Jeffries came to the seal without any concern at the weight of duty incumbent upon him; for, at the first, being merry over a bottle with some of his old friends, one of them told him that he would find the business heavy. *No*, said he, *I'll make it light.* But, to conclude with a strange inconsistency, he would drink and be merry, kiss and slaver, with these bon companions over night, as the way of such is, and the next day fall upon them, ranting and scolding with a virulence unsufferable."

But the richest portion of these volumes is the character of the Lord Chief Justice Saunders, the author of the Reports which Mr. Serjeant Williams has rendered popular by clustering about them the products of his learned industry. He has a better immortality in the memoir. What a picture is exhibited of the stoutest industry, joined with the most luxurious spirit of enjoyment—of the most intense acquaintance with nice technicalities and the most bounteous humour—of more distressing infirmities and scarcely less wit than those of Falstaff! What a singular being is here—what a laborious, acute, happy and affectionate spirit in a loathsome frame!—But, we forget;—we are indulging ourselves, when we ought to gratify our readers.

"The Lord Chief Justice Saunders succeeded in the room of Pemberton. His character, and his beginning, were equally strange. He was at first no better than a poor beggar boy, *if not a parish foundling, without known parents or relations.* He had found a way to live by obsequiousness (in Clement's-Inn, as I remember) and courting the attorney's clerks for scraps. The extraordinary observance and diligence of the boy made the society willing to do him good. He appeared very ambitious to learn to write; and one of the attorneys got a board knocked up at a window on the top of a staircase; and that was his desk, where he sat and wrote after copies of court and other hands the clerks gave him. He made himself so expert a writer that he took in business, and earned some pence by hackney writing. And thus, by degrees, he pushed his faculties, and fell to forms, and, by books that were lent him, became an exquisite entering clerk; and by the same course of improvement of himself, an able counsel, first in special pleading, then, at large. And, after he was called to the bar, had practice, in the King's Bench court, equal with any there. As to his person, he was very corpulent and beastly; a mere lump of morbid flesh. He used to say, *by his troggs*, (such a humorous way of talking he affected,) *none could say he wanted issue of his body, for he had nine in his back.* He was a fetid mass that offended his neighbours at the bar in the sharpest degree. Those, whose ill fortune it was to stand near him, were confessors, and, in summer-time, almost martyrs. This hateful decay of his carcass came upon him by continued sottishness; for, to say nothing of brandy, he was seldom without a pot of ale at his nose, or near him. That exercise was all he used; the rest of his life was sitting at his desk, or piping at home; and that *home* was a tailor's house in Butcher-Row, called his lodging, and the man's wife was his nurse, or worse; but by virtue of his money, of *which he made little account, though he got a great deal,* he soon became master of the family; and, being no changeling, he never removed, but was true to his friends, and they to him, to the last hour of his life.

"So much for his person and education. As for his parts, none had them more lively than he. Wit and repartee, in an affected rusticity, was natural to him. He was ever ready, and never at a loss; and none came so near as he to be a match for Serjeant Maynard. His great dexterity was in the art of special pleading, and he would lay snares that often caught his superiors, who were not aware of his traps. And he was so fond of success for his clients that, rather than fail, he would set the court hard with a trick; for which he met sometimes with a reprimand, which he would wittily ward off, so that no one was much offended with him. But Hales could not bear his irregularity of life; and for that, and suspicion of his tricks, used to bear hard upon him in the court. But no ill usage from the bench was too hard for his hold of business, being such as scarce any could do but himself. With all this, he had a goodness of nature and disposition in so great a degree that he may be deservedly styled a *philanthrope*. He was a very *Silenus* to the boys, as, in this place, I may term the students of the law, to make them merry whenever they had a mind to it. He had nothing of rigid or austere in him. If any, near him at the bar, grumbled at his stench, he ever converted the complaint into content and laughing with the abundance of his wit. As to his ordinary dealing, he was as honest as the driven snow was white; and *why not*, having no regard for money, nor desire to be rich? And, for good nature and condescension, there was not his fellow. I have seen him, for hours and half hours together, before the court sat, stand at the bar, with an audience of students over against him, putting of cases, and debating so as suited their capacities, and encouraging their industry. And so in the Temple, he seldom moved without a parcel of youths hanging about him, and he merry and jesting with them.

"It will be readily conceived that this man was never cut out to be a presbyter, or any thing that is severe and crabbed. In no time did he lean to faction, but did his business without offence to any. He put off officious talk of government or politics, with jests, and so made his wit a catholicon, or shield, to cover all his weak places and infirmities. When the court fell into a steady course of using the law against all kinds of offenders, this man was taken into the king's business; and had the part of drawing and perusal of almost all indictments and informations that were then to be prosecuted, with the pleadings thereon if any were special; and he had the settling of the large pleadings in the *quo warranto* against London. His lordship had no sort of conversation with him, but in the way of business, and at the bar; but once after he was in the king's business, he dined with his lordship, and no more. And there he showed another qualification he had acquired, and that was to play jigs upon a harpsichord; having taught himself with the opportunity of an old virginal of his landlady's; but in such a manner, not for defect but figure, as to see him were a jest. The king, observing him to be of a free disposition, loyal, friendly, and without greediness or guile, thought of him to be the chief justice of the King's Bench at that nice time. And the ministry could not but approve of it. So great a weight was then at stake, as could not be trusted to men of doubtful principles, or such as any thing might tempt to desert them. While he sat in the Court of King's Bench, he gave the rule to the general satisfaction of the lawyers. But his course of life was so different from what it had been, his business incessant, and, withal, crabbed; and his diet and exercise changed, that the constitution of his body, or head rather, could not sustain it, and he fell into an apoplexy and palsy, which numbed his parts; and he never recovered the strength of them. He out-lived the judgment in the *quo warranto*; but was not present, otherwise than by sending his opinion, by one of the judges, to be for the king, who, at the pronouncing of the judgment, declared it to be the court accordingly, which is frequently done in like cases."

Although we have been able to give but a few of the choice peculiarities of these volumes, our readers will be able to gather, from our extracts, that the profession of the law was a very different thing in the reign of Charles the Second, from what it is in the present era. There was something in it more robust and hearty than there is now. Lawyers treated on the dryest subjects, in a "full and heightened style," which now would receive merited ridicule, because it is natural no longer. When Lord Coke "wanders in the wilderness of the laws of the forest"—or stops to "recreate himself with a view of Dido's deer"—or looks on his own fourth Institute, as "the high and honourable building of the jurisdiction of the courts"—we feel that he uses the language of metaphor, merely because he thinks in it. Modern improvement has introduced a division of labour among the faculties. The regions of imagination and of reality are separated by stricter and more definite limits, than in the days of old. Our poems and orations are more wild and extravagant, and our ordinary duties more dry and laborious. Men have learned to refine on their own feelings—to analyze all their sensations—to class all their powers, feelings, and fantasies, as in a museum; and to mark and label them so that they may never be applied, except to appropriate uses. The imagination is only cultivated as a kind of exotic luxury. No one unconsciously writes in a picturesque style, or suffers the colour of his thoughts to suffuse itself over his disquisitions, without caring for the effect on the reader. The rich conceit is either suppressed, or carefully reserved to adorn some cold oration where it may be duly applauded. Our ancestors permitted the wall-flower, when it would, to spread out its sweets from the massive battlement, without thinking there was any thing extraordinary in its growth, or desiring to transplant it to a garden, where it would add little fragrance to the perfume of other flowers.

The study of the law has sunk of late years. Formerly, the path of those by whom it was chosen, though steep and rugged, was clear and open before them. Destitute of adventitious aids, they were compelled to salutary and hopeful toils. They were forced to trace back every doctrine to the principle which was its germ, and to search for their precedents amidst the remotest grandeur of our history. Patient labour was required of them, but their reward was certain. In the most barren and difficult parts of their ascent, they found, at least, in the masses which they surmounted, the stains and colourings of a humanizing antiquity to soften and to dignify their labours. But abridgments, commentaries, and digests without number, have precluded the necessity of these liberal researches, while the vast accumulation of statutes and decisions have rendered them almost hopeless. Instead of a difficult mountain to ascend, there is a briary labyrinth to penetrate. Wearied out with vain attempts, the student accepts such temporary helps as he can procure, and despairs of reducing the ever-increasing multitude of decisions to any fixed and intelligible principles. Thus his labours are not directed to a visible goal—nor cheered by the venerableness of old time—nor crowned with that certainty of conclusion, which is the best reward of scientific researches. The lot of a superficial student of a dry science, is, of all conditions, the most harassing and fruitless. The evil must increase until it shall work its own cure—until accumulated reports shall lose their authority—or the legislature shall be compelled, by the vastness of the mischief, to undertake the tremendous task of revising and condensing the whole statute law, and fixing the construction of the unwritten maxims within some tolerable boundaries.

REVIEW OF THE DRAMATIC LITERATURE OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH.

[Edinburgh Review.]

If Mr. Hazlitt has not generally met with impartial justice from his contemporaries, we must say that he has himself partly to blame. Some of the attacks of which he has been the object, have, no doubt, been purely brutal and malignant; but others have, in a great measure, arisen from feelings of which he has himself set the example. His seeming carelessness of that public opinion which he would influence—his love of startling paradoxes—and his intrusion of political virulence, at seasons when the mind is prepared only for the delicate investigations of taste, have naturally provoked a good deal of asperity, and prevented the due appreciation of his powers. We shall strive, however, to divest ourselves of all prepossessions, and calmly to estimate those talents and feelings which he has here brought to the contemplation of such beauty and grandeur, as none of the low passions of this "ignorant present time" should ever be permitted to overcloud.

Those who regard Mr. Hazlitt as an ordinary writer, have little right to accuse him of suffering antipathies in philosophy or politics to influence his critical decisions. He possesses one excellent quality, at least, for the office which he has chosen, in the intense admiration and love which he feels for the great authors on whose excellences he chiefly dwells. His relish for their beauties is so keen, that while he describes them, the pleasures which they impart become almost palpable to the sense; and we seem, scarcely in a figure, to feast and banquet on their "nectared sweets." He introduces us almost corporally into the divine presence of the Great of old time—enables us to hear the living oracles of wisdom drop from their lips—and makes us partakers, not only of those joys which they diffused, but of those which they felt in the inmost recesses of their souls. He draws aside the veil of Time with a hand tremulous with mingled delight and reverence; and descants, with kindling enthusiasm, on all the delicacies of that picture of genius which he discloses. His intense admiration of intellectual beauty seems always to sharpen his critical faculties. He perceives it, by a kind of intuitive power, how deeply soever it may be buried in rubbish; and separates it, in a moment, from all that would encumber or deface it. At the same time, he exhibits to us those hidden sources of beauty, not like an anatomist, but like a lover: he does not coolly dissect the form to show the springs whence the blood flows all eloquent, and the divine expression is kindled; but makes us feel it in the sparkling or softened eye, the wreathed smile, and the tender bloom. In a word, he at once analyzes and describes, so that our enjoyments of loveliness are not chilled, but brightened, by our acquaintance with their inward sources. The knowledge communicated in his lectures, breaks no sweet enchantment, nor chills one feeling of youthful joy. His criticisms, while they extend our insight into the causes of poetical excellence, teach us, at the same time, more keenly to enjoy, and more fondly to revere it.

It must seem, at first sight, strange, that powers like these should have failed to excite universal sympathy. Much, doubtless, of the coldness and misrepresentation cast on them, has arisen from causes at which we have already hinted—from the apparent readiness of the author to "give up to party what was meant for mankind"—and from the occasional breaking in of personal animosities on that deep harmony which should attend the reverent contemplation of genius. But we apprehend that there are other causes which have diminished the influence of Mr. Hazlitt's faculties, originating in his mind itself; and these we shall endeavour briefly to specify.

The chief of these may, we think, be ascribed primarily to the want of proportion, of arrangement, and of harmony, in his powers. His mind resembles the "rich stronde" which Spencer has so nobly described, and to which he has himself likened the age of Elizabeth, where treasures of every description lie, without order, in inexhaustible profusion. Noble masses of exquisite marble are there, which might be fashioned to support a glorious temple; and gems of peerless lustre, which would adorn the holiest shrine. He has no lack of the deepest feelings, the profoundest sentiments of humanity, or the loftiest aspirations after ideal good. But there are no great leading principles of taste to give singleness to his aims, nor any central points in his mind, around which his feelings may revolve, and his imaginations cluster. There is no sufficient distinction between his intellectual and his imaginative faculties. He confounds the truths of imagination with those of fact—the processes of argument with those of feeling—the immunities of intellect with those of virtue. Hence the seeming inconsistency of many of his doctrines. Hence the want of all continuity in his style. Hence his failure in producing one single, harmonious, and lasting impression on the hearts of his hearers. He never waits to consider whether a sentiment or an image is in place—so it be in itself striking. The keen sense of pleasure in intellectual beauty, which is the best charm of his writings, is also his chief deluder. He cannot resist a powerful image, an exquisite quotation, or a pregnant remark, however it may dissipate, or even subvert, the general feeling which his theme should inspire. Thus, on one occasion, in the midst of a violent political invective, he represents the objects of his scorn as "having been beguiled, like Miss Clarissa Harlowe, into a house of ill-fame, and, like her, defending themselves to the last;" as if the reader's whole current of feeling would not be diverted from all political disputes, by the remembrance thus awakened of one of the sublimest scenes of romance ever imbodied by human power. He will never be contented to touch that most strange and curious instrument, the human heart, with a steady aim, but throws his hand rapidly over the chords, mingling strange discord with "most eloquent music." Instead of conducting us onward to a given object, he opens so many delicious prospects by the wayside, and suffers us to gaze at them so long, that we forget the end of our journey. He is perpetually dazzled among the sunbeams of his fancy, and plays with them in elegant fantasy, when he should point them to the spots where they might fall on truth and beauty, and render them visible by a clearer and lovelier radiance than had yet revealed them.

The work before us is not the best verification of these remarks; for it has more of continuity, and less of paradox, than any of his previous writings. With the exception of some strong political allusions in the account of the Sejanus of Ben Jonson, it is entirely free from those expressions of party feeling which respect for an audience, consisting of men of all parties, and men of no party, ought always to restrain. There is also none of that personal bitterness towards Messrs. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, which disfigured his former lectures. His hostility towards these poets, the associates of his early days, has always, indeed, been mingled with some redeeming feelings which have heightened the regret occasioned by its public disclosure.—While he has pursued them with all possible severity of invective, and acuteness of sarcasm, he has protected their intellectual character with a chivalrous zeal. He has spoken as if "his only hate had sprung from his only love;" and his thoughts of its objects, deep rooted in old affection, could not lose all traces of their "primal sympathy." His bitterest language has had its dash of the early sweets, which no changes of opinion could entirely destroy. Still his audiences and his readers had ample ground of complaint for the intrusion of personal feelings, in inquiries which should be sacred from all discordant emotions. We rejoice to observe, that this blemish is now effaced; and that full and free course is at last given to that deep humanity which has ever held its current in his productions, sometimes in open day, and sometimes beneath the soil which it fertilized, though occasionally dashed and thrown back in its course by the obstacles of prejudice and of passion.

The first of these lectures consists of a general view of the subject, expressed in terms of the deepest veneration and of the most passionate eulogy. After eloquently censuring the gross prejudice, that genius and beauty are things of modern discovery, or that in old time a few amazing spirits shone forth amidst general darkness, as the harbingers of brighter days, the author proceeds to combat the notion that Shakspeare was a sort of monster of poetical genius, and all his contemporaries of an order far below him.

"He, indeed, overlooks and commands the admiration of posterity; but he does it from the *table land* of the age in which he lived. He towered above his fellows 'in shade and gesture proudly eminent;' but he was but one of a race of giants, the tallest, the strongest, the most graceful and beautiful of them; but it was a common and noble brood. He was not something sacred and aloof from the vulgar herd of men, but shook hands with Nature and the circumstances of the time; and is distinguished from his immediate contemporaries, not in kind, but in degree, and greater variety of excellence. He did not form a class or species by himself, but belonged to a class or species. His age was necessary to him; nor could he have been wrenched from his place in the edifice, of which he was so conspicuous a part, without equal injury to himself and it. Mr. Wordsworth says of Milton, that 'his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart.' This cannot be said with any propriety of Shakspeare, who certainly moved in a constellation of bright luminaries, and 'drew after him the third part of the heavens.'" Pp. 12, 13.

The author then proceeds to investigate the general causes of that sudden and rich development of poetical feeling which forms his theme. He attributes it chiefly to the mighty impulse given to thought by the Reformation—to the disclosure of all the marvellous stores of sacred antiquity, by the translation of the Scriptures—and to the infinite sweetness, breathing from the divine character of the Messiah, with which he seems to imagine that the people were not familiar in darker ages. We are far from insensible to the exquisite beauty with which this last subject is treated; and fully agree with our author, that "there is something in the character of Christ, of more sweetness and majesty, and more likely to work a change in the mind of man, than any to be found in history, whether actual or feigned." But we cannot think that the gentle influences which that character shed upon the general heart, were weak or partial even before the translation of the Scriptures. The young had received it, not from books, but from the living voice of their parents, made softer in its tones by reverence and love. It had tempered early enthusiasm, and prompted visions of celestial beauty, in the souls even of the most low, before men had been taught to reason on their faith. The instances of the Saviour's compassion—his wondrous and beneficent miracles—his agonies and death, did not lie forgotten during centuries, because the people could not read of them. They were written "on the fleshy tables of the heart," and softened the tenour of humble existence, while superstition, ignorance, and priestcraft held sway in high places.

These old feelings of love, however, tended greatly to sweeten and moderate the first excursions of the intellect, when released from its long thraldom. The new opening of the stores of classic lore, of Ancient History, of Italian Poetry, and of Spanish Romance, contributed much, doubtless, to the incitement and the perfection of our national genius. The discovery of the New World, too, opened fresh fields for the imagination to revel in. "Green islands, and golden sands," says our author, "seemed to arise, as by enchantment, out of the bosom of the watery waste, and invite the cupidity, or wing the imagination of the dreaming speculator. Fairy land was realized in new and unknown worlds."—"Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales—thrice happy isles," were found floating "like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,"—"beyond Atlantic seas, as dropped from the zenith." Ancient superstitions also still lingered among the people. The romance of human life had not then departed. It "was more full of traps and pitfalls; of moving accidents by flood and field: more way-laid by sudden and startling evils, it stood on the brink of hope and fear, or stumbled upon fate unawares,—while imagination, close behind it, caught at and clung to the shape of danger, or snatched a wild and fearful joy from its escape." The martial and heroic spirit was not dead. It was comparatively an age of peace, "Like Strength reposing on his own right arm;" but the sound of civil combat might still be heard in the distance,—the spear glittered to the eye of memory, or the clashing of armour struck on the imagination of the ardent and the young. The people of that day were borderers on the savage state, on the times of war and bigotry,—though themselves in the lap of arts, of luxury, and knowledge. They stood on the shore, and saw the billows rolling after the storm. They heard the tumult, and were still. Another source of imaginative feelings, which Mr. Hazlitt quotes from Mr. Lamb, is found in the distinctions of dress, and all the external symbols of trade, profession, and degree, by which "the surface of society was embossed with hieroglyphics, and poetry existed in act and complement extern." Lastly, our author alludes to the first enjoyment and uncontrolled range of our old poets through Nature, whose fairest flowers were then uncropped,—and to the movements of the soul then laid open to their view, without disguise or control. All those causes Mr. Hazlitt regards as directed, and their immediate effects as united by the genius of our country, native, unaffected, sturdy, and unyielding. His lecture concludes with a character, equally beautiful and just, of the Genius of our Poetry, with reference to the classical models, as having more of Pan than of Apollo:—"but Pan is a God, Apollo is no more!"

The five succeeding Lectures contain the opinions of the author on most of the celebrated works produced from the time of the Reformation, until the death of Charles the First. The second comprises the characters of Lyly, Marlow, Heywood, Middleton, and Rowley. The account of Lyly's Endymion is worthy of that sweet but singular work. The address of Eumenides to Endymion, on his awaking from his long sleep, "Behold the twig to which thou laidest down thy head is become a tree," is indeed, as described by our author, "an exquisitely chosen image, and dumb proof of the manner in which he has passed his life from youth to old age,—in a dream, a dream of love!" His description of Marlow's qualities, when he says "there is a lust of power in his writings, a hunger and thirst after unrighteousness, a glow of the imagination unhallowed by any thing but its own energies," is very striking. The characters of Middleton and Rowley in this Lecture, and those of Marston, Chapman, Deckar, and Webster in the third, are sketched with great spirit; and the peculiar beauties of each are dwelt on in a style and with a sentiment congenial with the predominant feeling of the poet. At the close of the Lecture, the observation, that the old dramatic writers have nothing theatrical about them, introduces the following eulogy on that fresh delight which books are ever ready to yield us.

"Here, on Salisbury Plain, where I write this, even here, with a few old authors, I can manage to get through the summer or the winter months, without ever knowing what it is to feel *ennui*. They sit with me at breakfast, they walk out with me before dinner. After a long walk through unfrequented tracts,—after starting the hare from the fern, or hearing the wing of the raven rustling above my head, or being greeted with the woodman's 'stern good-night' as he strikes into his narrow homeward path,—I can take 'mine ease at mine inn' beside the blazing hearth, and shake hands with Signor Orlando Frescobaldo, as the oldest acquaintance I have. Ben Jonson, learned Chapman, Master Webster, and Master Heywood are there; and, seated round, discourse the silent hours away. Shakspeare is there himself, rich in Cibber's Manager's coat. Spenser is hardly returned from a ramble through the woods, or is concealed behind a group of nymphs, fawns, and satyrs. Milton lies on the table as on an altar, never taken up or laid down without reverence. Lyly's Endymion sleeps with the moon that shines in at the window; and a breath of wind stirring at a distance, seems a sigh from the tree under which he grew old. Faustus disputes in one corner of the room with fiendish faces, and reasons of divine astrology. Bellafront soothes Mattheo, Vittoria triumphs over her Judges, and old Chapman repeats one of the hymns of Homer, in his own fine translation." Pp. 136, 137.

The spirit of this passage is very deep and cordial; and the expression, for the most part, exquisite. But we wonder that Mr. Hazlitt should commit so great an incongruity, as to represent the other poets around him in person, while Milton, introduced among the rest, is used only as the title of a book. Why are other authors to be "seated round," to cheer the critic's retirement as if living,—while Milton, like a petition in the House of Commons, is only ordered "to lie upon the table!"

In the Fourth Lecture, ample justice is done to Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger and Ben Jonson; but we think the same measure is not meted to Ford. We cannot regard the author of "'Tis a Pity she's a Whore," and "The Broken Heart," as "finical and fastidious." We are directly at issue, indeed, with our author on his opinions respecting the catastrophe of the latter tragedy. Calantha, Princess of Sparta, is celebrating the nuptials of a noble pair, with solemn dancing, when a messenger enters, and informs her that the king, her father, is dead:—she dances on. Another report is brought to her, that the sister of her betrothed husband is starved;—she calls for the other change. A third informs her that Ithocles, her lover, is cruelly murdered;—she complains that the music sounds dull, and orders sprightlier measures. The dance ended, she announces herself queen, pronounces sentence on the murderer of Ithocles, and directs the ceremonials of her coronation to be immediately prepared. Her commands are obeyed. She enters the Temple in white, crowned, while the dead body of her husband is borne on a hearse, and placed beside the altar; at which she kneels in silent prayer. After her devotions, she addresses Nearchus, Prince of Argos, as though she would choose him for her husband, and lays down all orders for the regulation of her kingdom, under the guise of proposals of marriage. This done, she turns to the body of Ithocles, "the shadow of her contracted lord," puts her mother's wedding ring on his finger, "to new-marry him whose wife she is," and from whom death shall not part her. She then kisses his cold lips, and dies smiling. This Mr. Hazlitt calls "tragedy in masquerade," "the true false gallop of sentiment;" and declares, that "any thing more artificial and mechanical he cannot conceive." He regards the whole scene as a forced transposition of one in Marston's Malcontent, where Aurelia dances on in defiance to the world, when she hears of the death of a detested husband. He observes, "that a woman should call for music, and dance on in spite of the death of a husband whom she hates, without regard to common decency, is but too possible: that she should dance on with the same heroic perseverance, in spite of the death of her father, and of every one else whom she loves, from regard to common courtesy or appearance, is not surely natural. The passions may silence the voice of humanity; but it is, I think, equally against probability and decorum, to make both the passions and the voice of humanity give way (as in the example of Calantha) to a mere form of outward behaviour. Such a suppression of the strongest and most uncontrollable feelings, can only be justified from necessity, for some great purpose,—which is not the case in Ford's play; or it must be done for the effect and eclat of the thing, which is not fortitude but affectation." The fallacy of this criticism appears to us to lie in the assumption, that the violent suppression of her feelings by the heroine was a mere piece of court etiquette—a compliment to the ceremonies of a festival. Surely the object was noble, and the effort sublime. While the deadly force of sorrow oppressed her heart, she felt that she had solemn duties to discharge, and that, if she did not arm herself against affliction till they were finished, she could never perform them. She could seek temporary strength only by refusing to pause—by hurrying on the final scene; and dared not to give the least vent to the tide of grief, which would at once have relieved her overcharged heart, and left her, exhausted, to die. Nothing less than the appearance of gayety could hide or suppress the deep anguish of her soul. We agree with Mr. Lamb, whose opinion is referred to by our author, that there is scarcely in any other play "a catastrophe so grand, so solemn, and so surprising as this!"

The Fifth Lecture, on Single Plays and Poems, brings into view many curious specimens of old humour, hitherto little known, and which sparkle brightly in their new setting. The Sixth, on Miscellaneous Poems and Works, is chiefly remarkable for the admirable criticism on the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sidney, with which it closes. Here the critic separates with great skill the wheat from the chaff, showing at once the power of his author, and its perversion, and how images of touching beauty and everlasting truth are marred by "the spirit of Gothic quaintness, criticism, and conceit." The passage, which is far too long for quotation, makes us desire more earnestly than ever that an author, capable of so lucid and convincing a development of his critical doctrines, would less frequently content himself with giving the mere results of his thought, and even conveying these in the most abrupt and startling language. A remark uttered in the parenthesis of a sarcasm, or an image thrown in to heighten a piece of irony, might often furnish extended matter for the delight of those whom it now only disgusts or bewilders.

The Seventh Lecture, on the works of Lord Bacon, compared as to style with those of Sir Thomas Browne and of Jeremy Taylor, is very unequal. The character of Lord Bacon is eloquent, and the praise sufficiently lavish; but it does not show any proper knowledge of his works. That of Jeremy Taylor is somewhat more appropriate, but too full of gaudy images and mere pomp of words. The style of that delicious writer is ingeniously described as "prismatic;" though there is too much of shadowy chillness in the phrase, adequately to represent the warm and tender bloom which he casts on all that he touches. And when we are afterwards told that it "unfolds the colours of the rainbow; floats like a bubble through the air; or is like innumerable dewdrops, that glitter on the face of morning, and twinkle as they glitter;"—we can only understand that the critic means to represent it as variegated, light, and sparkling: but it appears to us that the style of Jeremy Taylor is like nothing unsubstantial or airy. The blossoms put forth in his works spring from a deep and eternal stock, and have no similitude to any thing wavering or unstable. His account of Sir Thomas Browne, however, seems to us very characteristic, both of himself and of that most extraordinary of English writers. We can make room only for a part of it.

"As Bacon seemed to bend all his thoughts to the practice of life, and to bring home the light of science 'to the bosoms and business of men,' Sir Thomas Browne seemed to be of opinion, that the only business of life was to think; and that the proper object of speculation was, by darkening knowledge, to breed more speculation, and 'find no end in wandering mazes lost.' He chose the incomprehensible and the impracticable, as almost the only subjects fit for a lofty and lasting contemplation, or for the exercise of a solid faith. He cried out for an '*oh altitudo*' beyond the heights of revelation; and posed himself with apocryphal mysteries as the pastime of his leisure hours. He pushes a question to the utmost verge of conjecture, that he may repose on the certainty of doubt: and he removes an object to the greatest distance from him, that he may take a high and abstracted interest in it, consider it in relation to the sum of things, not to himself, and bewilder his understanding in the universality of its nature, and the inscrutableness of its origin. His is the sublime of indifference; a passion for the abstruse and imaginary. He turns the world round for his amusement, as if it were a globe of pasteboard. He looks down on sublunary affairs as if he had taken his station in one of the planets. The antipodes are next-door neighbours to him: and doomsday is not far off. With a thought he embraces both the poles; the march of his pen is over the great divisions of geography and chronology. Nothing touches him nearer than humanity. He feels that he is mortal only in the decay of nature, and the dust of long-forgotten tombs. The finite is lost in the infinite. The orbits of the heavenly bodies, or the history of empires, are to him but a point in time, or a speck in the universe. The great Platonic year revolves in one of his periods. Nature is too little for the grasp of his style. He scoops an antithesis out of fabulous antiquity, and rakes up an epithet from the sweepings of chaos. It is as if his books had dropped from the clouds, or as if Friar Bacon's head could speak. He stands on the edge of the world of sense and reason, and gets a vertigo by looking down at impossibilities and chimeras. Or he busies himself with the mysteries of the Cabbala, or the enclosed secrets of the heavenly quincunxes, as children are amused with tales of the nursery. The passion of curiosity (the only passion of childhood) had in him survived to old age, and had superannuated his other faculties. He moralizes and grows pathetic on a mere idle fancy of his own, as if thought and being were the same, or as if 'all this world were one glorious lie.' He had the most intense consciousness of contradictions and nonentities; and he decks them out in the pride and pedantry of words, as if they were the attire of his proper person. The categories hang about his neck like the gold chain of knighthood: and he 'walks gowned' in the intricate folds and swelling drapery of dark sayings and impenetrable riddles." Pp. 292—295.

The Eighth and Last Lecture begins with a few words on the merits of Sheil, Tobin, Lamb, and Cornwall, who, in our own time, have written in the spirit of the elder dramatists. The observations in this lecture, on the spirit of the romantic and classic literature, are followed by a striking development of the materials, and an examination of the success of the German drama. Mr. Hazlitt attributes the triumph of its monstrous paradoxes to those abuses and hypocrisies of society, those incoherences between its professions and its motives, which excite enthusiastic minds to seek for the opposite, at once, of its defects and blessings. His account of his own sensations on the first perusal of the Robbers, is one of the most striking passages in the work.

"I have half trifled with this subject; and I believe I have done so because I despaired of finding language for some old-rooted feelings I have about it, which a theory could neither give, nor can it take away. The Robbers was the first play I ever read; and the effect it produced upon me was the greatest. It stunned me like a blow; and I have not recovered enough from it to tell how it was. There are impressions which neither time nor circumstances can efface. Were I to live much longer than I have any chance of doing, the books I have read when I was young, I can never forget. Five-and-twenty years have elapsed since I first read the translation of the Robbers, but they have not blotted the impression from my mind; it is here still—an old dweller in the chambers of the brain. The scene, in particular, in which Moor looks through his tears at the evening sun from the mountain's brow, and says in his despair, 'It was my wish like him to live, like him to die: it was an idle thought, a boy's conceit,' took first hold of my imagination,—and that sun has to me never set!"

While we sympathize in all Mr. Hazlitt's sentiments of reverence for the mighty works of the older times, we must guard against that exclusive admiration of antiquity, rendered fashionable by some great critics, which would induce the belief that the age of genius is past, and the world grown too old to be romantic. We can observe in these Lectures, and in other works of their author, a jealousy of the advances of civilization as lessening the dominion of fancy. But this is, we think, a dangerous error; tending to chill the earliest aspirations after excellence, and to roll its rising energies back on the kindling soul. There remains yet abundant space for genius to possess; and science is rather the pioneer than the impeder of its progress. The level roads, indeed, which it cuts through unexplored regions, are, in themselves, less fitted for its wanderings than the tangled ways through which it delights to stray; but they afford it new glimpses into the wild scenes and noble vistas which open near them, and enable it to deviate into fresh scenes of beauty, and hitherto unexplored fastnesses. The face of nature changes not with the variations of fashion One state of society may be somewhat more favourable to the development of genius than another; but wherever its divine seed is cast, there will it strike its roots far beneath the surface of artificial life, and rear its branches into the heavens, far above the busy haunts of common mortals.

VARIOUS PROSPECTS OF MANKIND, NATURE, AND PROVIDENCE.

[Retrospective Review.]

Mr. Wallace, the author of the work before us, was of the number of those speculators who have delighted to form schemes of ideal felicity for their species. Men of this class, often despised as dreaming theorists, have been found among the best and wisest of all ages. Those, indeed, who have seen the farthest into their nature, have found the surest grounds of hope even for its earthly progress. Their enthusiasm has been, at the least, innoxious. The belief, that humanity is on the decline—that the energy of man is decaying—that the heart is becoming harder—and that imagination and intellect are dwindling away—lays an icy finger on the soul, confirms the most debasing selfishness, and tends to retard the good which it denies. We propose, therefore, in this article very cursorily to inquire how far the hopes of those who believe that man is, on the whole, advancing, are sanctioned by experience and by reason.

But we must not forget, that, in the very work before us, an obstacle to the happiness of the species is brought forward, which has subsequently been explained as of a dreadful nature, and has been represented as casting an impenetrable gloom over the brightest anticipations of human progress. We shall first set it forth in the words of Wallace—then trace its expansion and various applications by Malthus—and inquire how far it compels us to despair for man.

"Under a perfect government, the inconveniencies of having a family would be so entirely removed, children would be so well taken care of, and every thing become so favourable to populousness, that though some sickly seasons or dreadful plagues in particular climates might cut off multitudes, yet, in general, mankind would increase so prodigiously, that the earth would at last be overstocked, and become unable to support its numerous inhabitants.

"How long the earth, with the best culture of which it is capable from human genius and industry, might be able to nourish its perpetually increasing inhabitants, is as impossible as it is unnecessary to be determined. It is not probable that it could have supported them during so long a period as since the creation of Adam. But whatever may be supposed of the length of this period, of necessity it must be granted, that the earth could not nourish them for ever, unless either its fertility could be continually augmented, or, by some secret in nature, like what certain enthusiasts have expected from the philosopher's stone, some wise adept in the occult sciences should invent a method of supporting mankind quite different from any thing known at present. Nay, though some extraordinary method of supporting them might possibly be found out, yet if there was no bound to the increase of mankind, which would be the case under a perfect government, there would not even be sufficient room for containing their bodies upon the surface of the earth, or upon any limited surface whatsoever. It would be necessary, therefore, in order to find room for such multitudes of men, that the earth should be continually enlarging in bulk, as an animal or vegetable body.

"Now, since philosophers may as soon attempt to make mankind immortal, as to support the animal frame without food, it is equally certain, that limits are set to the fertility of the earth; and that its bulk, so far as is hitherto known, hath continued always the same, and probably could not be much altered without making considerable changes in the solar system. It would be impossible, therefore, to support the great numbers of men who would be raised up under a perfect government; the earth would be overstocked at last, and the greatest admirers of such fanciful schemes must foresee the fatal period when they would come to an end, as they are altogether inconsistent with the limits of that earth in which they must exist.

"What a miserable catastrophe of the most generous of all human systems of government! How dreadfully would the magistrates of such commonwealths find themselves disconcerted at that fatal period, when there was no longer any room for new colonies, and when the earth could produce no farther supplies! During all the preceding ages, while there was room for increase, mankind must have been happy; the earth must have been a paradise in the literal sense, as the greatest part of it must have been turned into delightful and fruitful gardens. But when the dreadful time should at last come, when our globe, by the most diligent culture, could not produce what was sufficient to nourish its numerous inhabitants, what happy expedient could then be found out to remedy so great an evil?

"In such a cruel necessity, must there be a law to restrain marriage? Must multitudes of women be shut up in cloisters, like the ancient vestals or modern nuns? To keep a balance between the two sexes, must a proportionable number of men be debarred from marriage? Shall the Utopians, following the wicked policy of superstition, forbid their priests to marry; or shall they rather sacrifice men of some other profession for the good of the state? Or, shall they appoint the sons of certain families to be maimed at their birth, and give a sanction to the unnatural institution of eunuchs? If none of these expedients can be thought proper, shall they appoint a certain number of infants to be exposed to death as soon as they are born, determining the proportion according to the exigencies of the state; and pointing out the particular victims by lot, or according to some established rule? Or, must they shorten the period of human life by a law, and condemn all to die after they had completed a certain age, which might be shorter or longer, as provisions were either more scanty or plentiful? Or what other method should they devise (for an expedient would be absolutely necessary) to restrain the number of citizens within reasonable bounds?

"Alas! how unnatural and inhuman must every such expedient be accounted? The natural passions and appetites of mankind are planted in our frame, to answer the best ends for the happiness both of the individuals and of the species. Shall we be obliged to contradict such a wise order? Shall we be laid under the necessity of acting barbarously and inhumanly? Sad and fatal necessity! And which, after all, could never answer the end, but would give rise to violence and war. For mankind would never agree about such regulations. Force and arms must at last decide their quarrels, and the deaths of such as fall in battle leave sufficient provisions for the survivors, and make room for others to be born.

"Thus the tranquillity and numerous blessings of the Utopian governments would come to an end; war, or cruel and unnatural customs, be introduced, and a stop put to the increase of mankind, to the advancement of knowledge, and to the culture of the earth, in spite of the most excellent laws and wisest precautions. The more excellent the laws had been, and the more strictly they had been observed, mankind must have sooner become miserable. The remembrance of former times, the greatness of their wisdom and virtue, would conspire to heighten their distress; and the world, instead of remaining the mansion of wisdom and happiness, become the scene of vice and confusion. Force and fraud must prevail, and mankind be reduced to the same calamitous condition as at present.

"Such a melancholy situation, in consequence merely of the want of provisions, is in truth more unnatural than all their present calamities. Supposing men to have abused their liberty, by which abuse vice has once been introduced into the world; and that wrong notions, a bad taste, and vicious habits, have been strengthened by the defects of education and government, our present distresses may be easily explained. They may even be called natural, being the natural consequences of our depravity. They may be supposed to be the means by which Providence punishes vice; and by setting bounds to the increase of mankind, prevents the earth's being overstocked, and men being laid under the cruel necessity of killing one another. But to suppose, that in the course of a favourable Providence a perfect government had been established, under which the disorders of human passions had been powerfully corrected and restrained; poverty, idleness and war banished; the earth made a paradise; universal friendship and concord established, and human society rendered flourishing in all respects; and that such a lovely constitution should be overturned, not by the vices of men, or their abuse of liberty, but by the order of nature itself, seems wholly unnatural, and altogether disagreeable to the methods of Providence."

To this passage, the gloomy theories of Mr. Malthus owe their origin. He took the evil which Wallace regarded as awaiting the species in its highest state of earthly perfection, as instant and pressing in almost every state of society, and as causing mankind perpetually to oscillate. He represented nature herself as imposing an adamantine barrier to improvement. He depicted the tendency of the species to increase in numbers, as arising from passion, mad and ungovernable as well as universal, and as resisted, in its fatal consequences, only by war, famine, or disease. He maintained, that man was placed by nature between two tremendous evils, and could never recede from the strait within which his movements were contracted.

The system thus promulgated in the first edition of the work on *Population*, could not be well applied to any practical uses. It tended to destroy the fair visions of human improvement, and to place a gigantic demon in their room. But it could not form a part of any rational scheme of legislation, because it represented the evils which it depicted as hopeless. Its only moral was despair. But its author—a man whose personal benevolence withstood his doctrines—became anxious to discover some moral purposes to which he might apply his scheme. Accordingly, in his second edition, which was so altered and rewritten as to be almost a new work, he introduced a new preventive check on the tendency of population to increase, which he designated "moral restraint," and proposed to inculcate, by the negative course of leaving all those who did not practise it to the consequences of their error. This new feature appears to us subversive of the whole system, in so far, at least, as it is designed to exhibit insuperable obstacles to the progressive happiness of man. Instead of the evil being regarded as inevitable, a means was expressly enforced by which it might be completely avoided. Celibacy was shown to be a state of attainable and exalted virtue. In calculating on the tendency of the species to increase, we were no longer required to speculate on a mere instinct, but on a thousand moral and intellectual causes—on the movements of reason, sensibility, imagination, and hope. The rainbow could be as easily grasped or a sun-beam measured by a line, as the operations of the blended passion and sentiment of love estimated by geometrical series! We will, however, examine a little more closely the popular objection to theories of human improvement, which the principle of population is supposed to offer.

The real question, in this case, is not whether, when the world is fully cultivated, the tendency of the species to increase will be greater than the means of subsistence; but whether this tendency really presses on us at every step of our progress. For, if there is no insuperable barrier to the complete cultivation of the earth, the cessation of all the countless evils of war, and the union of all the brethren of mankind in one great family, we may safely trust to Heaven for the rest. When this universal harmony shall begin, men will surely have attained the virtue and the wisdom to exercise a self-denial, which Mr. Malthus himself represents as fully within their power. In the era of knowledge and of peace, that degree of self-sacrifice can scarcely be impossible, which, even now, our philosopher would inculcate at the peril of starvation. At least, there can be no danger in promoting the happiness of the species, until it shall arise to this fulness; for we are told, that every effort towards it produces a similar peril with that which will embitter its final reign. And if it should exist at last, we may safely believe, that He who pronounced the blessing, "increase and multiply," will not abandon the work of his hands; but that this world then will have answered all the purposes of its creation, and that immortal state will begin, "in which we shall neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be as the angels of God."

Let us inquire, then, whether the evidence of history, or the present aspect of the world, warrant the belief, that the tendency of the species to increase beyond the means of subsistence is a necessary obstacle to the improvement of its condition. If the wretchedness of man really flowed from this source, it is strange that the discovery should not have been made during six thousand years of his misery. He is not usually thus obtuse, respecting the cause of his sorrows. It will be admitted, that his distresses have most frequently arisen from luxury and from war, as their immediate causes. The first will scarcely be attributed to the want of food; nor can the second be traced to so fantastical an origin. Shakspeare, indeed, represents Coriolanus, in his insolent contempt for humanity, as rejoicing in the approach of war, as the means of "venting the musty superfluity" of the people; but kings have not often engaged in the fearful game on so refined and philosophic principles. On the contrary, the strength of a state was always regarded, in old time, as consisting in the number of its citizens. And, indeed, it is impossible that any of the gigantic evils of mankind should have arisen from the pressure of population against the means of subsistence; because it is impossible to point out any one state in which the means of subsistence have been fully developed and exhausted. If the want of subsistence, then, has ever afflicted a people, it has not arisen, except in case of temporary famine, from a deficiency in the means of subsistence, but in the mode and spirit of using them. The fault has been not in nature, but in man. Population may, in a few instances, have increased beyond the energy of the people to provide for it, but not beyond the resources which God has placed within their power.

The assertion, that there is, in the constant tendency of population to press hardly against the means of subsistence, an insuperable check to any great improvement of the species, is in direct contradiction to history. The species has increased in numbers, and has risen in intelligence, under far more unfavourable circumstances than the present, in spite of this fancied obstacle. There is no stage of civilization, in which the objection to any farther advance might not have been urged with as much plausibility as at the present. While any region, capable of fruitfulness, remains uninhabited and barren, the argument applies with no more force against its cultivation, than it would have applied against the desire of him who founded the first city to extend its boundaries. While the world was before him, he might as reasonably have been warned to decline any plan for bringing wastes into tillage, on the ground that the tendency of man to multiply would thus be incited beyond the means of supplying food, as we, in our time, while the greater part of the earth yet remains to be possessed. And, indeed, the objection has far less force now than at any preceding period:—because not only is space left, but the aids of human power are far greater than in old time. Machinery now enables one man to do as much towards the supply of human wants, as could formerly have been done by hundreds. And shall we select this as the period of society in which the species must stand still, because the means of subsistence can be carried but a little farther?

It seems impossible to cast a cursory glance over the earth, and retain the belief, that there is some insuperable obstacle in the constitution of nature, to the development of its vast and untried resources. Surely, immense regions of unbounded fertility—long successions of spicy groves—trackless pastures watered by ocean—rivers formed to let in wealth to the midst of a great continent—and islands which lie calmly on the breast of crystal seas, were not created for eternal solitude and silence. Until these are peopled, and the earth is indeed "replenished and subdued," the command and the blessing, "increase and multiply," must continue unrecalled by its great Author. Shall not Egypt revive its old fruitfulness, and Palestine again flow with milk and honey?

The hypothesis, that population left to itself will increase in a geometrical progression, while the means of subsistence can only be enlarged in an arithmetical progression, is a mere fantasy. Vegetables, cattle, and fish, have far greater powers of productiveness than the human species; and the only obstacle to those powers being developed in an equal degree, is the want of room for them to increase, or the want of energy or wisdom in man to apply the bounty of nature to its fittest uses. The first want cannot exist while the larger part of the earth is barren, and the riches of the ocean remain unexhausted. The second, with all the disadvantages of ignorance, war, tyranny, and vice, has not prevented the boundaries of civilization from widely extending. What is there then in this particular stage of society, which should induce the belief, that the sinews of humanity are shrivelled up, and its energy falling to decay? The same quantity of food or of clothing—the same comforts and the same luxuries—which once required the labour of a hundred hands, are now produced almost without personal exertion. And is the spirit in man so broken down and debased, that, with all the aids of machinery, he cannot effect as much as the labour of his own right arm would achieve in the elder time? If, indeed, he is thus degenerate, the fault, at least, is not in nature, but in external and transitory causes. But we are prepared clearly, though briefly, to show, that man has been and is, on the whole, advancing in true virtue, and in moral and intellectual energy.

It cannot be denied, that there are many apparent oscillations in the course of the species. If we look at only a small portion of history, it may seem retrograde, as a view of one of the windings of a noble river may lead us to imagine that it is flowing from the ocean. The intricacies of human affairs, the perpetual opposition of interests, prejudices, and passions, do not permit mankind to proceed in a right line; but, if we overlook any large series of ages, we shall clearly perceive, that the course of man is towards perfection. In contemplating the past, our attention is naturally attracted to the illustrious nations, whose story is consecrated by our early studies. But even if we take these, and forget the savage barbarism of the rest of the world, we shall find little to excite our envy. Far be it from us to deny, that there were, among these, some men of pure and disinterested virtue, whose names are like great sea-marks in the dreariness of the perspective, and whom future generations can only desire to imitate. Our nature has always had some to vindicate its high capabilities of good. But even among the privileged classes of Greece and Rome—the selected minority, to whom all the rights of nature were confined more strictly than in the strictest modern despotism—how rare are the instances of real and genuine goodness! The long succession of bloody tragedies—that frightful alternation of cruelties and of meannesses—the Peloponnesian war, was perpetrated in the midst of the people, who had just carried the arts to their highest perfection. Gratitude, honesty, and good faith, had no place in the breast of Athenian citizens. The morals of the Spartans were even more despicable than those of their rivals. Their mixture of barbarity and of craft towards their foes and the states which were tributary to their power—their unnatural sacrifice of the most sacred of the affections of nature to mere national glory—and their dreadful conduct towards the wretched Helots, who were their property,—have scarcely a parallel in human history. The long conspiracy of Rome against the liberties of mankind, carried on from the time of its foundation until it began to decline, served to string every sinew into a horrid rigidity, and to steel the heart to the feelings of compassion. This is the description of its progress by one of its own historians:

"Raptores orbis, postquam cuncta vastantibus defuere terræ, et mare scrutantur; si locuples hostis est, avari; si pauper, ambitiosi: quos non oriens non occidens satiaverit; soli omnium opes atque inopiam pari affectu concupiscunt. Auferre, trucidare, rapere, falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem pacem appellent." (*Tacitus, Vita Agricolæ,* 30.)

The proscriptions of Marius and Sylla alone proved what this savage spirit could perpetrate at home, when it had exhausted all opportunities of satiating, among foreign states, its thirst for slaughter.

If we pass over the improvements in morals—the amelioration of war—the progress of political science—and the redemption of the female sex from degradation and from bondage—we shall find, in one great change alone, ample reason to rejoice in the advances of the species. The simple term, *humanity*, expresses the chief difference between our times and the brightest of classical ages. In those there was no feeling for man, as man—no recognition of a common brotherhood—no sense of those qualities which all men have in common, and of those claims which those who are "made of one blood" have on each other for justice and for mercy. Manhood was nothing, citizenship was all in all. Nearly all the virtues were aristocratical and exclusive. The number of slaves—their dreadful condition—and the sanction which the law gave to all the cruelties practised on them—showed that the masters of the world had no sense of the dignity of their nature, whatever they might feel for the renown of their country, or the privileges of their order. The Spartan youths massacred their Helots, to nurture their valour. Indeed, the barbarities inflicted on that miserable race, by those whom we are sometimes taught to admire, would exceed belief, if they were not attested by the clearest proofs. At Rome, slaves, when too old for work, were often sent to an island in the Tiber, and left there to perish. On the slightest offence, they were frequently thrown into fish-ponds, exposed to wild beasts, or sentenced to die upon the cross. And in the same spirit of contempt for humanity, and veneration for the privileged orders, parents had power to imprison their children or put them to death, and wives were left, without protection, to the brutal ferocity of their husbands.

With how different feelings are the rights of humanity regarded in these happier seasons! Slavery is abolished throughout the Christian kingdoms of Europe, and, with few exceptions, equal justice is administered to all. There is no grief which does not meet with pity, and few miseries which do not excite the attempt to relieve them. Men are found of sensibilities keen even to agony, who, tremblingly alive in every fibre to wretchedness, have yet the moral heroism to steel their nerves to the investigation of the most hideous details of suffering, with no desire of applause or wish for reward, except that which success itself will give them. Within a few short years, what great moral changes have been effected! The traffic in human beings, which was practised without compunction or disgrace, and defended in parliament as a fair branch of commerce, is now made a felony, and those who are detected in pursuing it would almost be torn in pieces by popular fury. The most cruel enactments against freedom of thought and of discussion have been silently repealed, while scarcely a voice has been raised to defend or to mourn them. And, above all, a moral elevation has been given to the great mass of the rising generation, by the provision for their instruction, of which no time, or change, or accident can deprive them.

There is a deep-rooted opinion, which has been eloquently propounded by some of the first critics of our age, that works of imagination must necessarily decline as civilization advances. It will readily be conceded, that no individual minds can be expected to arise, in the most refined periods, which will surpass those which have been developed in rude and barbarous ages. But there does not appear any solid reason for believing, that the mighty works of old time occupy the whole region of poetry—or necessarily chill the fancy of these later times by their vast and unbroken shadows. Genius does not depend on times or on seasons, it waits not on external circumstances, it can neither be subdued by the violence of the most savage means, nor polished away or dissipated among the refinements of the most glittering scenes of artificial life. It is "itself alone." To the heart of a young poet, the world is ever beginning anew. He is in the generation by which he is surrounded, but he is not of it; he can live in the light of the holiest times, or range amidst gorgeous marvels of eldest superstition, or sit "lone upon the shores of old romance," or pierce the veil of mortality, and "breathe in worlds to which the heaven of heavens is but a veil." The very deficiency of the romantic, in the actual paths of existence, will cause him to dwell in thought more apart from them, and to seek the wildest recesses in those regions which imagination opens to his inward gaze. To the eye of young joy, the earth is as fresh as at the first—the dew-drop is lit up as it was in Eden—and "the splendour in the grass, the glory in the flower," yet glitters as in the spring-time of the world.

The subjects in which genius rejoices are not the vain and the transitory, but the true and the eternal, which are the same through all changes of society and shifting varieties of fashion. The heavens yet "tell the glory of God;" the hills, the vales, and the ocean, do not alter, nor does the heart of man wax old. The wonders of these are as exhaustless as they are lasting. While these remain, the circumstances of busy life—the exact mechanism of the social state—will affect the true poet but little. The seeds of genius, which contain within themselves the germs of expanded beauties and divinest sublimities, cannot perish. Wheresoever they are scattered, they must take root, striking far below the surface, overcropped and exhausted by the multitude of transitory productions, into a deep richness of soil, and, rising up above the weeds and tangled underwood which would crush them, lift their innumerable boughs into the free and rejoicing heavens.

The advancement of natural science and of moral truth do not tend really to lesson the resources of the bard. The more we know, the more we feel there is yet to be known. The mysteries of nature and of humanity are not lessened, but increased, by the discoveries of philosophic skill. The lustre which breaks on the vast clouds, which encircle us in our earthly condition, does not merely set in clear vision that which before was hidden in sacred gloom; but, at the same time, half exhibits masses of magnificent shadow, unknown before, and casts an uncertain light on vast regions, in which the imagination may devoutly expatiate. A plastic superstition may fill a limited circle with beautiful images, but it chills and confines the fancy, almost as strictly as it limits the reasoning faculties. The mythology of Greece, for example, while it peopled earth with a thousand glorious shapes, shut out the free grace of nature from poetic vision, and excluded from the ken the high beatings of the soul. All the loveliness of creation, and all the qualities, feelings, and passions, were invested with personal attributes. The evening's sigh was the breath of Zephyr—the streams were celebrated, not in their rural clearness, but as visionary nymphs —and ocean, that old agitator of sublimest thoughts, gave place, in the imagination, to a trident-bearing god. The tragic muse almost "forgot herself to stone," in her lone contemplations of destiny. No wild excursiveness of fancy marked their lighter poems—no majestical struggle of high passions and high actions filled the scene—no genial wisdom threw a penetrating, yet lovely, light on the silent recesses of the bosom. The diffusion of a purer faith restored to poetry its glowing affections, its far-searching intelligence, and its excursive power. And not only this, but it left it free to use those exquisite figures, and to avail itself of all the chaste and delicate imagery, which the exploded superstition first called into being. In the stately regions of imagination, the wonders of Greek fable yet have place, though they no longer hide from our view the secrets of our nature, or the long vistas which extend to the dim verge of the moral horizon. Well, indeed, does a grea living poet assert their poetic existence, under the form of defending the science of the stars:

"For Fable is Love's world, his home, his birth-place;
Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays, and talismans,
And spirits; and delightedly believes
Divinities, being himself divine.
The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had their haunts in dale or piny mountain,
Or forest, by slow stream or pebbly spring,
Or chasms and watery depths! all these have vanish'd;
They live no longer in the faith of reason!
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names;
And to yon starry world they now are gone,
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth
With man as with their friend; and to the lover
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
Shoot influence down; and, even at this day
'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
And Venus that brings every thing that's fair!"*

The poet is the inheritor of the imaginative treasures of all creeds which reason has now exploded. The dim gigantic shadows of the north—the gentle superstitions of the Greeks—the wild and wondrous prodigies of the Arabian enchantment—the dark rites of magic, more heart-stirring than all—have their places in the vast region of his soul. When we climb above the floating mists which have so long overspread humanity, to breathe a purer air, and gaze on the unclouded heavens, we do not lose our feeling of veneration for majestic errors, nor our sense of their glories. Instead of wandering in the region of cloud, we overlook it all, and behold its gorgeous varieties of arch, minaret, dome, or spire, without partaking in its delusions.

But we have no need of resort to argument, in order to show that genius is not gradually declining. A glance at its productions, in the present age, will suffice to prove the gloomy mistake of desponding criticism. We will sketch very lightly over the principal living authors, to illustrate this position—satisfied that the mere mention of their names will awaken, within our readers, recollections of delight, far more than sufficient triumphantly to contravene the theory of those who believe in the degeneracy of genius.

And first—in the great walk of poesy—is Wordsworth, who, if he stood alone, would vindicate the immortality of his art. He has, in his works, built up a rock of defence for his species, which will resist the mightiest tides of demoralizing luxury. Setting aside the varied and majestic harmony of his verse—the freshness and the grandeur of his descriptions—the exquisite softness of his delineations of character—and the high and rapturous spirit of his choral songs—we may produce his "divine philosophy" as unequalled by any preceding bard. And surely it is no small proof of the infinity of the resources of genius, that in this late age of the world, the first of all philosophic poets should have arisen, to open a new vein of sentiment and thought, deeper and richer than yet had been laid bare to mortal eyes. His rural pictures are as fresh and as lively as those of Cowper, yet how much lovelier is the poetic light which is shed over them? His exhibition of gentle peculiarities of character, and dear immunities of heart, is as true and as genial as that of Goldsmith, yet how much is its interest heightened by its intimate connection, as by golden chords, with the noblest and most universal truths? His little pieces of tranquil beauty are as holy and as sweet as those of Collins, and yet, while we feel the calm of the elder poet gliding into our souls, we catch farther glimpses through the luxuriant boughs into "the highest heaven of invention." His soul mantles as high with love and joy, as that of Burns, but yet "how bright, how solemn, how serene," is the brimming and lucid stream? His poetry not only discovers, within the heart, new faculties, but awakens within, its untried powers, to comprehend, and to enjoy its beauty and its wisdom.

Not less marvellously gifted, though in a far different manner, is Coleridge, who, by a strange error, has been usually regarded as belonging to the same school, partaking of the same peculiarities, and upholding the same doctrines. Instead, like Wordsworth, of seeking the sources of sublimity and of beauty in the simplest elements of humanity, he ranges through all history and science, investigating all that has really existed, and all that has had foundation only in the strangest and wildest minds, combining, condensing, developing, and multiplying the rich products of his research with marvellous facility and skill; now pondering fondly over some piece of exquisite loveliness, brought from a wild and unknown recess; now tracing out the hidden germ of the eldest and most barbaric theories; and now calling fantastic spirits from the vasty deep, where they have slept since the dawn of reason. The term, "myriad-minded," which he has happily applied to Shakspeare, is truly descriptive of himself. He is not one, but Legion—"rich with the spoils of time," richer in his own glorious imagination and sportive fantasy. There is nothing more wonderful than the facile majesty of his images, or rather of his worlds of imagery, which, even in his poetry or his prose, start up before us self-raised and all perfect, like the palace of Aladdin. He ascends to the sublimest truths, by a winding track of sparkling glory, which can only be described in his own language—

"the spirits' ladder,
That from this gross and visible world of dust
Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds
Builds itself up; on which the unseen powers
Move up and down on heavenly ministries—
The circles in the circles, that approach
The central sun with ever-narrowing orbit."

In various beauty of versification, he has never been exceeded. Shakspeare, doubtless, has surpassed him in linked sweetness and exquisite continuity, and Milton in pure majesty and classic grace—but this is in one species of verse only—and, taking all his trials of various metres, the swelling harmony of his blank verse, the sweet breathing of his gentler odes, and the sybil-like flutter alternate with the murmuring charm of his wizard spells, we doubt if even these great masters have so fully developed the music of the English tongue. He has yet completed no adequate memorials of his genius; yet it is most unjust to assert, that he has done nothing or little. To refute this assertion, there are, his noble translation of *Wallenstein*—his love-poems of intensest beauty—his *Ancient Mariner*, with its touches of profoundest tenderness amidst the wildest and most bewildering terrors—his holy and most sweet tale of *Christabel*, with its rich enchantments and its richer humanities—the depths, the sublimities, and the pensive sweetness of his tragedy—the heart-dilating sentiments scattered through his "*Friend*"—and the stately imagery which breaks upon us at every turn of the golden paths of his metaphysical labyrinths. And, if he has a power within mightier than that which even these glorious creations indicate, shall he be censured because he has deviated from the ordinary course of the age, in its development; and, instead of committing his imaginative wisdom to the press, has delivered it from his living lips? He has gone about in the true spirit of an old Greek bard, with a noble carelessness of self, giving fit utterance to the divine spirit within him. Who that has heard can ever forget him—his mild benignity—the unbounded variety of his knowledge—the fast succeeding products of his imagination—the child-like simplicity with which he rises, from the driest and commonest theme, into the widest magnificence of thought, pouring on the soul a stream of beauty and of wisdom, to mellow and enrich it for ever? The seeds of poetry, which he has thus scattered, will not perish. The records of his fame are not in books only, but on the fleshly tablets of young hearts, who will not suffer it to die even in the general ear, however base and unfeeling criticism may deride their gratitude!

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* Coleridge's translation of Schiller's *Wallenstein*.

Charles Lamb is as original as either of these, within the smaller circle which he has chosen. We know not of any writer, living or dead, to whom we can fitly liken him. The exceeding delicacy of his fancy, the keenness of his perceptions of truth and beauty, the sweetness and the wisdom of his humour, and the fine interchange and sportive combination of all these, so frequent in his works, are entirely and peculiarly his own. As it has been said of Swift, that his better genius was his spleen, it may be asserted of Lamb that his kindliness is his inspiration. With how nice an eye does he detect the least hitherto unnoticed indication of goodness, and with how true and gentle a touch does he bring it out to do good to our natures! How new and strange do some of his more fantastical ebullitions seem, yet how invariably do they come home to the very core, and smile at the heart! He makes the majesties of imagination seem familiar, and gives to familiar things a pathetic beauty or a venerable air. Instead of finding that every thing in his writings is made the most of, we always feel that the tide of sentiment and of thought is pent in, and that the airy and variegated bubbles spring up from a far depth in the placid waters. The loveliness of his thought looks, in the quaintness of his style, like a modest beauty, laced-in and attired in a dress of the superb fashion of the elder time. His versification is not greatly inferior to that of Coleridge, and it is, in all its best qualities, unlike that of any other poet. His heroic couplets are alternately sweet, terse, and majestical; and his octo-syllabic measures have a freeness and completeness, which mark them the pure Ionic of verse.

Barry Cornwall, with the exception of Coleridge, is the most genuine poet of love, who has, for a long period, appeared among us. There is an intense and passionate beauty, a depth of affection, in his little dramatic poems, which appear even in the affectionate triflings of his gentle characters. He illustrates that holiest of human emotions, which, while it will twine itself with the frailest twig, or dally with the most evanescent shadow of creation, wasting its excess of kindliness on all around it, is yet able to "look on tempests and be never shaken." Love is gently omnipotent in his poems; accident and death itself are but passing clouds, which scarcely vex and which cannot harm it. The lover seems to breathe out his life in the arms of his mistress, as calmly as the infant sinks into its softest slumber. The fair blossoms of his genius, though light and trembling at the breeze, spring from a wide, and deep, and robust stock, which will sustain far taller branches without being exhausted. In the vision, where he sees "the famous Babylon," in his exquisite sonnets, and yet more in his *Marcian Colonna*, has he shown a feeling and a power for the elder venerableness of the poetic art, which, we are well assured, he is destined successfully to develope.

Some of our readers will, perhaps, wonder, that we have thus long delayed the mention of the most popular of the living poets. But, though we have no desire to pass them by, we must confess, that we do not rest chiefly on them our good hope for English genius. Lord Byron's fame has arisen, we suspect, almost as much from an instinctive awe of his nobility, and from a curiosity to know the secrets of his diseased soul which he so often partially gratifies, as from the strength and turbid majesty of his productions. His mind is, however, doubtless cast in no ordinary mould. His chief poetic attributes appear, to us, to be an exceedingly quick sensibility to external beauty and grandeur, a capability and a love of violent emotion, and a singular mastery of language. He has no power over himself, which is the highest of all qualifications for a poet as it is for a man. He has no calm meditative greatness, no harmonizing spirit, no pure sense of love and of joy. He is as far beneath the calmy imaginative poets as the region of tempests and storms is below the quiet and unclouded heavens. He excites intense feeling, by leading his readers to the brink of unimaginable horror, by dark hints of nameless sins, or by the strange union of virtues and of vices, which God and nature have for ever divided. Yet are there touches of grace and beauty scattered throughout his works, occasional bursts of redeeming enthusiasm, which make us deeply regret the too-often "admired disorder" of his soul. The stream of his genius falls, from a vast height, amidst bleakest rocks, into depths, which mortal eye cannot fathom, and into which it is dangerous to gaze; but it sends up a radiant mist in its fall, which the sun tints with heavenly colouring, and it leaves its echoes on the golden and quiet clouds! The too frequent perversion of his genius does not prevent it from showing, in its degree, the immortality of the most sublime of the human faculties.

Sir Walter Scott, if his poetry is not all which his countrymen proclaim it, is a bard, in whose success every good man must rejoice. His feeling of nature is true, if it is not profound; his humanity is pure, if it is not deep; his knowledge of facts is choice and various, if his insight into their philosophy is not very clear or extensive. Dr. Percy's *Reliques* prepared his way, and the unpublished *Christabel* aided his inspirations; but he is entitled to the credit of having first brought romantic poetry into fashion. Instead of the wretched sentimentalities of the Della Cruscan school, he supplied the public with pictures of nature, and with fair visions of chivalry. If he is, and we hope as well as believe that he is, the author of the marvellous succession of Scotch romances, he deserves far deeper sentiments of gratitude than those which his poems awaken. Then does he merit the praise of having sent the mountain breezes into the heart of this great nation; of having supplied us all with a glorious crowd of acquaintances, and even of friends, whose society will never disturb or weary us; and of having made us glow a thousand times with honest pride, in that nature of which we are partakers!

Mr. Southey is an original poet, and a delightful prose-writer, though he does not even belong to the class which it has been the fashion to represent him as redeeming. He has neither the intensity of Wordsworth, nor the glorious expansion of Coleridge; but he has their holiness of imagination, and childlike purity of thought. His fancies are often as sweet and as heavenly as those which "may make a crysome child to smile." There is, too, sometimes an infantine love of glitter and pomp, and of airy castle-building, displayed in his more fantastical writings. The great defect of his purest and loftiest poems is, that they are not imbued with humanity; they do not seem to have their only home on "this dear spot, this human earth of ours," but their scenes might be transferred, perhaps with advantage, to the moon or one of the planets. In the loneliest bower which poesy can rear, deep in a trackless wild, or in some island, placed "far amid the melancholy main," the air of this world must yet be allowed to breathe, if the poet would interest "us poor humans." It may heighten even the daintiest solitude of blessed lovers,

> "All the while to feel and know,
> That they are in a world of wo,
> On such an earth as this."

Mr. Southey's poems are beautiful and pure, yet too far from our common emotions. His *Joan of Arc*, his *Thalaba*, and his *Roderick*, are full of the stateliest pictures But his *Kehama* is his greatest work—the most marvellous succession of fantasies, "sky tinctured," ever called into being, without the aid of real and hearty faith! Mr. Southey's prose style is singularly lucid and simple. His life of Nelson is a truly British work, giving the real heartiness of naval strength of our country, without ostentation or cant; his memoir of Kirke White is very unaffected and pathetic; and his Essays on the State of the Poor, really touching in their benevolence, and their well-regulated sympathies. Of the violences of his more decidedly political effusions, we shall not here venture to give an opinion; except to express our firm belief, that they have never been influenced by motives unworthy of a man of genius.

Mr. Campbell has not done much which is excellent in poetry, but that which he has written well is admirable in its kind. His battle-odes are simple, affecting, and sublime.—Few passages can exceed the dying speech of Gertrude, in sweet pathos, or the war-song of old Outalissi, in stern and ferocious grandeur. It is astonishing, that he, who could produce these and other pieces of most genuine poetry, should, on some occasions, egregiously mistake gaudy words for imagination: and heap up fragments of bad metaphors, as though he could scale the "highest heaven of invention," by the accumulation of mere earthly materials.

It is the singular lot of Moore, to seem, in his smaller pieces, as though he were fitted for the highest walk of poetry; and in his more ambitious efforts, to appear as though he could fabricate nothing but glittering tinsel. The truth is, however, that those of his attempts, which the world thinks the boldest, and in which we regard him as unsuccessful, are not above, but beneath his powers. A thousand tales of veiled prophets, who wed ladies in the abodes of the dead, and frighten their associates to death by their maimed and mangled countenances, may be produced with far less expense of true imagination, fancy, or feeling, than one sweet song, which shall seem the very echo "of summer days and delightful years." Moore is not fit for the composition of tales of demon frenzy and feverish strength, only because his genius is of too pure and noble an essence. He is the most sparkling and graceful of triflers. It signifies little, whether the Fives Court or the Palace furnish him with materials. However repulsive the subject, he can "turn all to favour, and to prettiness." Clay and gold, subjected to his easy inimitable hand, are wrought into shapes, so pleasingly fantastic, that the difference of the subject is lost in the fineness of the workmanship. His lighter pieces are distinguished at once by deep feeling, and a gay festive air, which he never entirely loses. He leads wit, sentiment, patriotism, and fancy, in a gay fantastic round, gambols sportively with fate, and holds a dazzling fence with care and with sorrow. He has seized all the "snatches of old tunes," which yet lingered about the wildest regions of his wild and fanciful country; and has fitted to them words of accordance, the most exquisite. There is a luxury in his grief, and a sweet melancholy in his joy, which are old and well remembered in our experience, though scarcely ever before thus nicely revived in poetry.

The works of Crabbe are full of good sense, condensed thought, and lively picture; yet the greater part of them is almost the converse of poetry. The mirror which he holds up to nature, is not that of imagination, which softens down the asperities of actual existences, brings out the stately and the beautiful, while it leaves the trivial and the low in shadow, and sets all things which it reflects in harmony before us: on the contrary, it exhibits the details of the coarsest and most unpleasing realities, with microscopic accuracy and minuteness. Some of his subjects are, in themselves, worthless—others are absolutely revolting—yet it is impossible to avoid admiring the strange nicety of touch with which he has felt their discordances, and the ingenuity with which he has painted them. His likenesses absolutely startle us.—There are cases in which this intense consciousness of little circumstances is prompted by deep passion; and, whenever Mr. Crabbe seizes one of these, his extreme minuteness rivets and enchants us. The effect of this vivid picturing in one of his tales, where a husband relates to his wife the story of her own intrigue before marriage, as a tale of another, is thrilling and grand. In some of his poems, as his *Sir Eustace Grey* and the *Gipsy-woman's Confession*, he has shown that he can wield the mightiest passions with ease, when he chooses to rise from the contemplation of the individual to that of the universal; from the delineation of men and things, to that of man and the universe.

We dissent from many of Leigh Hunt's principles of morality and of taste; but we cannot suffer any difference of opinion to prevent the avowal of our deep sense of his poetical genius. He is a poet of various and sparkly fancy, of real affectionate heartiness, and of pathos as deep and pure as that of any living writer. He unites an English homeliness, with the richest Italian luxury. The story of *Rimini* is one of the most touching, which we have ever received into our "heart of hearts." The crispness of the descriptive passages, the fine spirit of gallantry in the chivalrous delineations, the exquisite gradations of the fatal affection and the mild heart-breaking remorse of the heroine, form, altogether, a body of sweetly-bitter recollections, for which none but the most heartless of critics would be unthankful. The fidelity and spirit of his little translations are surprising. Nor must we forget his prose works;—the wonderful power, with which he has for many years sent forth weekly essays, of great originality, both of substance and expression; and which seem now as fresh and unexhausted as ever. We have nothing here to do with his religion or his politics;—but, it is impossible to help admiring the healthful impulses, which he has so long been breathing "into the torpid breast of daily life;" or the plain and manly energy, with which he has shaken the selfism of the age, and sent the claims of the wretched in full and resistless force to the bosoms of the proud, or the thoughtless. In some of his productions—especially in several numbers of the *Indicator*—he has revived some of those lost parts of our old experience, which we had else wholly forgotten; and has given a fresh sacredness to our daily walks and ordinary habits. We do not see any occasion in this for terms of reproach or ridicule. The scenery around London is not the finest in the world; but it is all which an immense multitude can see of nature, and surely it is no less worthy an aim to hallow a spot which thousands may visit, than to expatiate on the charms of some dainty solitude, which can be enjoyed only by an occasional traveller.

There are other living poets, some of them of great excellence, on whose merits we should be happy to dwell, but that time and space would fail us. We might expatiate on the heaven-breathing pensiveness of Montgomery—on the elegant reminiscences of Rogers—on the gentle eccentricity of Wilson—on the luxurious melancholy of Bowles—or on the soft beauties of the Ettrick Shepherd. The works of Lloyd are rich in materials of reflection—most intense, yet most gentle—most melancholy, yet most full of kindness—most original in philosophic thought, yet most calm and benignant towards the errors of the world. Reynolds has given delightful indications of a free, and happy, and bounteous spirit, fit to sing of merry out-laws and green-wood revelries, which we trust he will suffer to refresh us with its blithe carollings. Keats, whose *Endymion* was so cruelly treated by the critics, has just put forth a volume of poems which must effectually silence his deriders. The rich romance of his *Lamia*—the holy beauty of his *St. Agnes' Eve*—the pure and simple diction and intense feeling of his *Isabella*—and the rough sublimity of his *Hyperion*—cannot be laughed down, though all the periodical critics in England and Scotland were to assail them with their sneers. Shelley, too, notwithstanding the odious subject of his last tragedy, evinced in that strange work a real human power, of which there is little trace among the old allegories and metaphysical splendours of his earlier productions. No one can fail to perceive, that there are mighty elements in his genius, although there is a melancholy want of a presiding power—a central harmony—in his soul. Indeed, rich as the present age is in poetry, it is even richer in promise. There are many minds—among which we may, particularly, mention that of Maturin—which are yet disturbed even by the number of their own incomplete perceptions. These, however, will doubtless fulfil their glorious destiny, as their imaginations settle into that calm lucidness, which in the instance of Keats has so rapidly succeeded to turbid and impetuous confusion.

The dramatic literature of the present age does not hold a rank proportioned to its poetical genius. But our tragedy, at least, is superior to any which has been produced since the rich period of Elizabeth and of James. Though the dramatic works of Shiel, Maturin, Coleridge, and Milman, are not so grand, and harmonious, and impressive, as the talent of their authors would lead us to desire, they are far superior to the tragedies of Hill, Southern, Murphy, Johnson, Philipps, Thomson, Young, Addison, or Rowe. Otway's *Venice Preserved* alone—and that only in the structure of its plot—is superior to the *Remorse*, to *Bertram*, *Fazio*, or *Evadne*. And then—more pure, more dramatic, more gentle, than all these, is the tragedy of *Virginius*—a piece of simple yet beautiful humanity—in which the most exquisite succession of classic groups is animated with young life and connected by the finest links of interest—and the sweetest of Roman stories lives before us at once, new and familiar to our bosoms.

We shall not be suspected of any undue partiality towards modern criticism. But its talent shows, perhaps, more decidedly than any thing else, the great start which the human mind has taken of late years. Throughout all the periodical works extant, from the *Edinburgh Review* down to the lowest of the magazines, striking indications may be perceived of "that something far more deeply interfused," which is now working in the literature of England. We not rarely see criticisms on theatrical performances of the preceding evening in the daily newspapers, which would put to shame the elaborate observations of Dr. Johnson on Shakspeare. Mr. Hazlitt—incomparably the most original of the regular critics—has almost raised criticism into an independent art, and, while analyzing the merits of others, has disclosed stores of sentiment, thought, and fancy, which are his own peculiar property. His relish for the excellencies of those whom he eulogizes is so keen, that, in his delineations, the pleasures of intellect become almost as vivid and substantial as those of sense. He introduces us into the very presence of the great of old time, and enables us almost to imagine that we hear them utter the living words of beauty and wisdom. He makes us companions of their happiest hours, and share not only in the pleasures which they diffused, but in those which they tasted. He discloses to us the hidden soul of beauty, not like an anatomist but like a lover. His criticisms, instead of breaking the sweetest enchantments of life, prolongs them, and teaches us to love poetic excellence more intensely, as well as more wisely.

The present age is, also, honourably distinguished by the variety and the excellence of productions from the pen of women. In poetry—there is the deep passion, richly tinged with fancy, of Baillie—the delicate romance of Mitford—the gentle beauty and feminine chivalry of Beetham—and the classic elegance of Hemans. There is a greater abundance of female talent among the novelists. The exquisite sarcasm of humour of Madame D'Arblay—the soft and romantic charm of the novels of the Porters—the brilliant ease and admirable good sense of Edgeworth—the intense humanity of Inchbald—the profound insight into the fearful depths of the soul with which the author of *Glenarvon* is gifted—the heart-rending pathos of Opie—and the gentle wisdom, the holy sympathy with the holiest childhood, and the sweet imaginings, of the author of *Mrs. Leicester's School*—soften and brighten the literary aspect of the age. These indications of female talent are not only delightful in themselves, but inestimable as proofs of the rich intellectual treasures which are diffused throughout the sex, to whom the next generation will owe their first and their most sacred impressions.

But, after all, the best intellectual sign of the present times is the general education of the poor. This ensures duration to the principles of good, by whatever political changes the frame of society may be shaken. The sense of human rights and of human duties is not now confined to a few, and, therefore, liable to be lost, but is stamped in living characters on millions of hearts. And the foundations of human improvement thus secured, it has a tendency to advance in a true geometrical progression. Meanwhile, the effects of the spirit of improvement which have long been silently preparing in different portions of the globe, are becoming brilliantly manifest. The vast continent of South America, whether it continue nominally dependent on European states, or retain its own newly-asserted freedom, will teem with new intellect, enterprise, and energy. Old Spain, long sunk into the most abject degradation, has suddenly awakened, as if refreshed from slumber, and her old genius must revive with her old dignities. A bloodless revolution has just given liberty to Naples, and thus has opened the way for the restoration of Italy. That beautiful region again will soon inspire her bards with richer strains than of yore, and diffuse throughout the world a purer luxury. Amidst these quickenings of humanity, individual poets, indeed, must lose that personal importance which in darker periods would be their portion. All selfism—all predominant desire for the building up of individual fame—must give way to the earnest and simple wish to share in, and promote, the general progress of the species. He is unworthy of the name of a great poet, who is not contented that the loveliest of his imaginations should be lost in the general light, or viewed only as the soft and delicate streaks which shall usher in that glorious dawn, which is, we believe, about to rise on the world, and to set no more!

ON PULPIT ORATORY.

WITH REMARKS ON THE REV. ROBERT HALL.

[London Magazine.]

The decline of eloquence in the Senate and at the Bar is no matter of surprise. In the freshness of its youth, it was the only medium by which the knowledge and energy of a single heart could be communicated to thousands. It supplied the place, not only of the press, but of that general communication between the different classes of the state, which the intercourses of modern society supply. Then the passions of men, unchilled by the frigid customs of later days, left them open to be inflamed or enraptured by the bursts of enthusiasm, which would now be met only with scorn. In our courts of law occasions rarely arise for animated addresses to the heart; and even when these occur, the barrister is fettered by technical rules, and yet more by the technical habits and feelings, of those by whom he is encircled. A comparatively small degree of fancy, and a glow of social feeling, directed by a tact which will enable a man to proceed with a constant appearance of directing his course within legal confines, are now the best qualifications of a forensic orator. They were exhibited by Lord Erskine in the highest perfection, and attended with the most splendid success. Had he been greater than he was, he had been nothing. He ever seemed to cherish an affection for the technicalities of his art, which won the confidence of his duller associates. He appeared to lean on these as his stays and resting-places, even when he ventured to look into the depth of human nature, or to catch a momentary glimpse of the regions of fantasy. When these were taken from him, his powers fascinated no longer. He was exactly adapted to the sphere of a court of law—above his fellows, but not beyond their gage—and giving to the forms which he could not forsake, an air of venerableness and grandeur. Any thing more full of beauty and wisdom than his speeches, would be heard only with cold and bitter scorn in an English court of justice. In the houses of parliament, mightier questions are debated; but no speaker hopes to influence the decision. Indeed the members of opposition scarcely pretend to struggle against the "dead eloquence of votes," but speak with a view to an influence on the public mind, which is a remote and chilling aim. Were it otherwise, the academic education of the members—the prevalent disposition to ridicule, rather than to admire—and the sensitiveness which resents a burst of enthusiasm as an offence against the decorum of polished society—would effectually repress any attempt to display an eloquence in which intense passion should impel the imagination, and noble sentiment should be steeped in fancy. The orations delivered on charitable occasions,—consisting, with few exceptions, of poor conceits, miserable compliments, and hackneyed metaphors,—are scarcely worthy of a transient allusion.

But the causes which have opposed the excellence of pulpit oratory in modern times are not so obvious. Its subjects have never varied, from the day when the Holy Spirit visibly descended on the first advocates of the gospel, in tongues of fire. They are in no danger of being exhausted by frequency, or changed with the vicissitudes of mortal fortune. They have immediate relation to that eternity, the idea of which is the living soul of all poetry and art. It is the province of the preachers of Christianity to develope the connection between this world and the next—to watch over the beginnings of a course which will endure for ever—and to trace the broad shadows cast from imperishable realities on the shifting scenery of earth. This sublunary sphere does not seem to them as trifling or mean, in proportion as they extend their views onward; but assumes a new grandeur and sanctity, as the vestibule of a statelier and an eternal region. The mysteries of our being—life and death—both in their strange essences, and in their sublimer relations, are topics of their ministry. There is nothing affecting in the human condition, nothing majestic in the affections, nothing touching in the instability of human dignities,—the fragility of loveliness,—or the heroism of self-sacrifice—which is not a theme suited to their high purposes. It is theirs to dwell on the eldest history of the world—on the beautiful simplicities of the patriarchal age—on the stern and awful religion, and marvellous story of the Hebrews—on the glorious visions of the prophets, and their fulfilment—on the character, miracles, and death of the Saviour—on all the wonders, and all the beauty of the Scriptures. It is theirs to trace the spirit of the boundless and the eternal, faintly breathing in every part of the mystic circle of superstition, unquenched even amidst the most barbarous rites of savage tribes, and all the cold and beautiful shapes of Grecian mould. The inward soul of every religious system—the philosophical spirit of all history—the deep secrets of the human heart, when grandest or most wayward—are theirs to search and to develope. Even those speculations which do not immediately affect man's conduct and his hopes are theirs, with all their high casuistry; for in these, at least, they discern the beatings of the soul against the bars of its earthly tabernacle, which prove the immortality of its essence, and its destiny to move in freedom through the vast ethereal circle to which it thus vainly aspires. In all the intensities of feeling, and all the regalities of imagination, they may find fitting materials for their passionate expostulations with their fellow men to turn their hearts to those objects which will endure for ever.

It appears, therefore, at first observation, strange, that in this country, where an irreligious spirit has never become general, the oratory of the pulpit has made so little progress. The ministers of the Established Church have not, on the whole, fulfilled the promise given in the days of its early zeal. The noble enthusiasm of Hooker—the pregnant wit of South—the genial and tolerant warmth of Tillotson—the vast power of reasoning and observation of Barrow—have rarely been copied, even feebly, by their successors. Jeremy Taylor stands altogether alone among churchmen. Who has ever manifested any portion of that exquisite intermixture of a yearning love with a heavenly fancy, which enabled him to embody and render palpable the holy charities of his religion in the loveliest and most delicate images? Who has ever so encrusted his subjects with candied words; or has seemed, like him, to take away the sting of death with "rich conceit;" or has, like him, half persuaded his hearers to believe that they heard the voice of pitying angels? Few, indeed, of the ministers of the church have been endued with the divine imagination which might combine, enlarge, and vivify the objects of sense, so as, by stately pictures, to present us with symbols of that uncreated beauty and grandeur in which hereafter we shall expatiate. The most celebrated of them have been little more than students of vast learning and research, unless, with Warburton and Horseley, they have aspired at once boldly to speculate, and imperiously to dogmatize.

It cannot be doubted, that the species of patronage, by which the honours and emoluments of the establishment are distributed, has tended to prevent the development of genius within its pale. But, perhaps, we may find a more adequate cause for the low state of its preaching in the very beauty and impressiveness of its rites and appointed services. The tendency of religious ceremonies, of the recurrence of old festivals, and of a solemn and dignified form of worship, is, doubtless, to keep alive tender associations in the heart, and to preserve the flame of devotion steady and pure, but not to incite men to look abroad into their nature, or to prompt any lofty excursions of religious fancy. There have, doubtless, been eloquent preachers in the church of Rome,—because in her communion the ceremonies themselves are august and fearful, and because her proselyting zeal inspired her sons with peculiar energy. But episcopacy in England is by far the most tolerant of systems ever associated with worldly power. Its ministers, until the claim of some of them, to the exclusive title of evangelical, created dissensions, breathed almost uniformly a spirit of mildness and peace. Within its sacred boundaries, all was order, repose, and charity. Its rights and observances were the helps and leaning-places of the soul, on which it delighted to rest amidst the vicissitudes of the world, and in its approach to its final change. The fulness, the majesty, and the dignified benignities of the Liturgy sunk deep into the heart, and prevented the devout worshipper from feeling the want of strength or variety in the discourses of the preacher. The church-yard, with its gentle risings, and pensive memorials of affection, was a silent teacher, both of vigilance and love. And the village spire, whose "silent finger points to heaven," has supplied the place of loftiest imaginings of celestial glory.

Obstacles of a far different kind long prevented the advancement of pulpit eloquence among the Protestant Dissenters. The ministers first ejected for non-conformity were men of rigid honesty and virtue,—but their intellectual sphere was little extended beyond that of their fellows. There cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose that they sacrificed their worldly interest from any regard to the principles of free inquiry, which have since almost become axioms. They believed that their compliance with the requisitions of the monarch would be offensive to God, and that in refusing to yield it they were doing his will; but they were prepared in their turn to assume the right of interpreting the Bible for others, and of condemning them for a more extended application of their example. Harassed, ridiculed, and afflicted, they naturally contracted an air of rigidity, and refused, in their turn, with horror, an extensive sympathy with the world. The controversies in which the learned men among the Dissenters were long occupied, having respect, not to grand and universal principles, but to petty questions of ceremony and minor points of faith, tended yet farther to confine and depress their genius. Their families were not the less scenes of love, because they preserved parental authority in its state; but the austerity of their manner tended to repress the imaginative faculties of the young. If they indulged themselves in any relaxation of manner, it was not with flowing eloquence, but with the quaint conceit and grave jest that they garnished their conversation or their discourses. Their religion wore a dark and uncouth garb; but to this we are indebted, in no small degree, for its preservation through times of demoralizing luxury.

A great change has taken place, of late years, in the literature and eloquence of Protestant Dissenters. As they ceased to be objects of persecution or of scorn, they insensibly lost the austerity and exclusiveness of their character. They descended from their dusty retirements to share in the pursuits and innocent enjoyments of "this bright and breathing world." Their honest bigotries gave way at the warm touch of social intercourse with those from whom they dissented. Meanwhile, the exertions of Whitefield,—his glowing, passionate, and awful eloquence;—his daring and quenchless enthusiasm,—and the deep and extensive impression which he made throughout the kingdom, necessarily aroused those who received his essential doctrines, into new zeal. The impulse thus given was happily refined by a taste for classical learning, and for the arts and embellishments of life, which was then gradually insinuating itself into their churches. Some of the new converts who forsook the establishment, not from repugnance to its constitution, but to its preachers, maintained, in the first eagerness of their faith, the barbarous notion that human knowledge was useless, and even dangerous, to the Christian minister. The absurdity of this position, however strikingly exemplified in the advantages gained by the enemies of those who acted on it, served only to increase the desire of the more enlightened and liberal among the non-conformists, to emulate the church in the intellectual qualification of their preachers. They speedily enlarged the means of education among them for the sacred office, and encouraged those habits of study, which promote a refinement and delicacy of feeling in the minds which they enlighten. Meanwhile, their active participation in the noblest schemes of benevolence, tended yet farther to expand their moral horizon. Youths were found among them prepared to sacrifice all the enjoyments of civilized life, and at the peril of their lives to traverse the remotest and the wildest regions, that they might diffuse that religion which is everywhere the parent of arts, charities, and peace. It is not the least benefit of their Missionary exertions, that they have given a romantic tinge to the feelings of men "in populous city pent," and engrossed with the petty and distracting cares of commerce. These form the true Evangelical chivalry, supplying to their promoters no small measure of that mental refinement and elevation, which the far less noble endeavours to recover the Holy Sepulchre shed on Europe in the middle ages. It is not easy to estimate the advantages which spring from the extension of the imagination into the grandest regions of the earth, and from the excitement of sympathies for the condition of the most distant and degraded of the species. The merchant, whose thoughts would else rarely travel beyond his desk and his fire-side, is thus busied with high musings on the progress of the Gospel in the deserts of Africa—skims with the lonely bark over tropical seas—and sends his wishes and his prayers over deserts which human footstep has rarely trodden. Missionary zeal, thus diffused among the people, has necessarily operated yet more strongly on the minds of the ministers, who have leisure to indulge in these delicious dreamings which such a cause may sanction. These excellent men are now, for the most part, not only the instructors, but the ornaments of the circles in which they move. The time which they are able to give to literature is well employed for the benefit of their flocks. In the country, more especially, their gentle manners, their extended information, and their pure and blameless lives, do incalculable good to the hearts of their ruder hearers, independent of their public services. Not only in the more solemn of their duties,—in admonishing the guilty, comforting the afflicted, and cheering the dying—do they bless those around them; but by their demeanour, usually dignified, yet cheerful, and their conversation decorous, yet lively; they raise incalculably the tone of social intercourse, and heighten the innocent enjoyment of their friends. Some of them are, at the present day, exhibiting no ordinary gifts and energies;—and to the most distinguished of these, we propose to direct the attention of our readers.

Mr. Hall, though perhaps the most distinguished ornament of the Calvinistic[*] Dissenters, does not afford the best opportunity for criticism. His excellence does not consist in the predominance of one of his powers, but in the exquisite proportion and harmony of all. The richness, variety, and extent of his knowledge, are not so remarkable as his absolute mastery over it. He moves about in the loftiest sphere of contemplation, as though he were "native and endued to its element." He uses the finest classical allusions, the noblest images, and the most exquisite words, as though they were those which came first to his mind, and which formed his natural dialect. There is not the least appearance of straining after greatness in his most magnificent excursions, but he rises to the loftiest heights with a child-like ease. His style is one of the clearest and simplest—the least encumbered with its own beauty—of any which ever has been written. It is bright and lucid as a mirror, and its most highly-wrought and sparkling embellishments are like ornaments of crystal, which, even in their brilliant inequalities of surface, give back to the eye little pieces of true imagery set before them.

The works of this great preacher are, in the highest sense of the term, imaginative, as distinguished not only from the didactic, but from the fanciful. He possesses "the vision and the faculty divine," in as high a degree as any of our writers in prose. His noblest passages do but make truth visible in the form of beauty, and "clothe upon" abstract ideas, till they become palpable in exquisite shapes. The dullest writer would not convey the same meaning in so few words, as he has done in the most sublime of his illustrations. Imagination, when like his of the purest water, is so far from being improperly employed on divine subjects, that it only finds its real objects in the true and the eternal. This power it is which disdains the scattered elements of beauty, as they appear distinctly in an imperfect world, and strives by accumulation, and by rejecting the alloy cast on all things, to imbody to the mind that ideal beauty which shall be realized hereafter. This, by shedding a consecrating light on all it touches, and "bringing them into one," anticipates the future harmony of creation. This already sees the "soul of goodness in things evil," which shall one day change the evil into its likeness. This already begins the triumph over the separating powers of death and time, and renders their victory doubtful, by making us feel the immortality of the affections. Such is the faculty which is employed by Mr. Hall to its noblest uses. There is no rhetorical flourish—no mere pomp of words—in his most eloquent discourses. With vast excursive power, indeed, he can range through all the glories of the Pagan world, and seizing those traits of beauty which they derived from primeval revelation, restore them to the system of truth. But he is ever best when he is intensest—when he unveils the mighty foundations of the rock of ages—or makes the hearts of his hearers vibrate with a strange joy which they will recognise in more exalted stages of their being.

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[*] We use this epithet merely as that which will most distinctively characterize the extensive class to which it is applied—well aware that there are shades of difference among them—and that many of them would decline to call themselves after any name but that of Christ.

Mr. Hall has, unfortunately, committed but few of his discourses to the press. His Sermon on the tendencies of Modern Infidelity is one of the noblest specimens of his genius. Nothing can be more fearfully sublime, than the picture which he gives of the desolate state to which Atheism would reduce the world; or more beautiful and triumphant, than his vindication of the social affections. His Sermon on the Death of Princess Charlotte contains a philosophical and eloquent development of the causes which make the sorrows of those who are encircled by the brightest appearances of happiness, peculiarly affecting; and gives an exquisite picture of the gentle victim adorned with sacrificial glories. His discourses on War—on the Discouragements and supports of the Christian Ministry—and on the Work of the Holy Spirit—are of great and various excellence. But, as our limits will allow only a single extract, we prefer giving the close of a Sermon preached in the prospect of the invasion of England by Napoleon, in which he blends the finest remembrance of the antique world—the dearest associations of British patriotism—and the pure spirit of the gospel—in a strain as noble as could have been poured out by Tyrtæus.

"To form an adequate idea of the duties of this crisis, it will be necessary to raise your minds to a level with your station, to extend your views to a distant futurity, and to consequences the most certain, though most remote. By a series of criminal enterprises, by the successes of guilty ambition, the liberties of Europe have been gradually extinguished: the subjugation of Holland, Switzerland, and the free towns of Germany, has completed that catastrophe; and we are the only people in the eastern hemisphere who are in possession of equal laws, and a free constitution. Freedom, driven from every spot on the continent, has sought an asylum in a country which she always chose for her favourite abode: but she is pursued even here, and threatened with destruction. The inundation of lawless power, after covering the whole earth, threatens to follow us here; and we are most exactly, most critically placed in the only aperture where it can be successfully repelled, in the Thermopylæ of the universe. As far as the interests of freedom are concerned, the most important by far of sublunary interests, you, my countrymen, stand in the capacity of the federal representatives of the human race; for with you it is to determine (under God) in what condition the latest posterity shall be born; their fortunes are intrusted to your care, and on your conduct at this moment depends the colour and complexion of their destiny. If liberty, after being extinguished on the continent, is suffered to expire here, whence is it ever to emerge in the midst of that thick night that will invest it? It remains with you then to decide whether that freedom, at whose voice the kingdoms of Europe awoke from the sleep of ages, to run a career of virtuous emulation in every thing great and good; the freedom which dispelled the mists of superstition, and invited the nations to behold their God; whose magic touch kindled the rays of genius, the enthusiasm of poetry, and the flame of eloquence; the freedom which poured into our lap opulence and arts, and embellished life with innumerable institutions and improvements, till it became a theatre of wonders; it is for you to decide whether this freedom shall yet survive, or be covered with a funeral pall, and wrapped in eternal gloom. It is not necessary to await your determination. In the solicitude you feel to approve yourselves worthy of such a trust, every thought of what is afflicting in warfare, every apprehension of danger must vanish, and you are impatient to mingle in the battle of the civilized world. Go then, ye defenders of your country, accompanied with every auspicious omen; advance with alacrity into the field, where God himself musters the hosts to war. Religion is too much interested in your success, not to lend you her aid; she will shed over this enterprise her selectest influence. While you are engaged in the field many will repair to the closet, many to the sanctuary; the faithful of every name will employ that prayer which has power with God; the feeble hands which are unequal to any other weapon, will grasp the sword of the Spirit; and from myriads of humble, contrite hearts, the voice of intercession, supplication, and weeping, will mingle in its ascent to heaven with the shout of battle and the shock of arms.

"While you have every thing to fear from the success of the enemy, you have every means of preventing that success, so that it is next to impossible for victory not to crown your exertions. The extent of your resources, under God, is equal to the justice of our cause. But should Providence determine otherwise, should you fall in this struggle, should the nation fall, you will have the satisfaction (the purest allotted to man) of having performed your part; your names will be enrolled with the most illustrious dead, while posterity to the end of time, as often as they revolve the events of this period, (and they will incessantly revolve them,) will turn to you a reverential eye, while they mourn over the freedom which is entombed in your sepulchre. I cannot but imagine the virtuous heroes, legislators, and patriots, of every age and country, are bending from their elevated seats to witness this contest, as if they were incapable, till it be brought to a favourable issue, of enjoying their eternal repose. Enjoy that repose, illustrious immortals! Your mantle fell when you ascended, and thousands, inflamed with your spirit, and impatient to tread in your steps, are ready to *swear by Him that sitteth upon the throne, and liveth for ever and ever*, they will protect freedom in her last asylum, and never desert that cause which you sustained by your labours, and cemented with your blood. And thou, sole Ruler among the children of men, to whom the shields of the earth belong, *gird on thy sword, thou Most*

Mighty: go forth with our hosts in the day of battle! Impart, in addition to their hereditary valour, that confidence of success which springs from thy presence! Pour into their hearts the spirit of departed heroes! Inspire them with thine own; and, while led by thine hand, and fighting under thy banners, open thou their eyes to behold in every valley and in every plain, what the prophet beheld by the same illumination—chariots of fire, and horses of fire: *Then shall the strong man be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark; and they shall burn together, and none shall quench them.*"

There is nothing very remarkable in Mr. Hall's manner of delivering his sermons. His simplicity, yet solemnity of deportment, engage the attention, but do not promise any of his most rapturous effusions. His voice is feeble, but distinct, and, as he proceeds, trembles beneath his images, and conveys the idea, that the spring of sublimity and beauty in his mind is exhaustless, and would pour forth a more copious stream, if it had a wider channel than can be supplied by the bodily organs. The plainest, and least inspired of his discourses, are not without delicate gleams of imagery and felicitous turns of expression. He expatiates on the prophecies with a kindred spirit, and affords awful glimpses into the valley of vision. He often seems to conduct his hearers to the top of the "Delectable Mountains," whence they can see from afar the glorious gates of the eternal city. He seems at home among the marvellous Revelations of St. John; and, while he expatiates on them, leads his hearers breathless through ever-varying scenes of mystery, far more glorious and surprising than the wildest of oriental fables. He stops when they most desire that he should proceed —when he has just disclosed the dawnings of the inmost glory to their enraptured minds—and leaves them full of imaginations of "things not made with hands,"—of joys too ravishing for smiles—and of impulses which wing their hearts, "along the line of limitless desires."

RECOLLECTIONS OF LISBON.

[NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]

On the first of May, 1818, I sailed in one of the government packets, from the beautiful harbour of Falmouth, for Lisbon. The voyage, though it only lasted eight days, was sufficiently long to excite an earnest desire for our arrival at the port of our destiny. The water which so majestically stretches before us, when seen from a promontory or headland, loses much of its interest and its grandeur when it actually circles round us and shuts us in from the world. The part which we are able to discern from the deck of a vessel, appears of very small diameter, and its aspect in fine weather is so uniform as to weary the eye, which seems to sicken with following the dance of the sunbeams, which alone diversify its surface. There is something painfully restless and shadowy in all around us, which forces on our hearts that feeling of the instability and transitoriness of our nature, which we lose among the moveless grandeurs of the universe. On the sea, all without, instead of affording a resting-place for the soul, is emblematic of the fluctuation of our mortal being. Those who have long been accustomed to it seem accommodated to their lot in feeling and in character; snatch a hasty joy with eagerness wherever it can be found, careless of the future, and borne lightly on the wave of life without forethought or struggle. To a landsman there is something inexpressibly sad in the want of material objects which endure. The eye turns disappointed from the glorious panoply of clouds which attend the setting sun, where it has fancied thrones, and golden cities, and temples with their holy shrines far sunken within outer courts of splendour, while it feels that they are but for a moment, gay mockeries of the state of man on earth. Often, during my little voyage, did I, while looking over the side of the vessel on the dark water, think of the beautiful delineation by the most profound of living poets, of the tender imaginations of a mariner who had been reared among the mountains, and in his heart was "half a shepherd on the stormy seas," who was wont to hear in the piping shrouds "the tones of waterfalls and inland sounds of caves and trees," and

"When the regular wind
Between the tropics fill'd the steady sail,
And blew with the same breath through days and weeks,
Lengthening invisibly its weary line
Along the cloudless main, who in those hours
Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze:
And while the broad green wave and sparkling foam
Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
In union with the employment of his heart,
He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains—saw the forms of sheep that grazed
On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country gray
Which he himself had worn."[*]

I remember, however, with gratitude two evenings, just after the renewal of the moon, which were rendered singularly lovely by a soft, tender, and penetrating light which seemed scarcely of this world. The moon on its first appearance, before the western lustre had entirely faded away, cast no reflection, however pale, on the waves; but seemed like some princely maiden exposed for the first time to vulgar gaze, gently to shrink back as though she feared some contamination to her pure and celestial beauty from shining forth on so busy and turbulent a sphere. As night advanced, it was a solemn pleasure to stand on the deck of the vessel, borne swiftly along the noiseless sea, and gaze on the far-retiring stars in the azure distance. The mind seems, in such a scene, almost to "o'er-inform its tenement of clay," and to leap beyond it. It dwells not on the changes of the world; for in its high abstraction, all material things seem but passing shadows. Life, with its realities, appears like a vanishing dream, and the past a tale scarcely credited. The pulses of mortal existence are almost suspended—"thought is not—in enjoyment it expires." Nothing seems to be in the universe but one's self and God. No feeling of loneliness has entrance, for the great spirit of Eternal Good seems shedding mildest and selectest influences on all things.

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[*] See Wordsworth's most affecting pastoral of "The Brothers."

On the eighth morning after our departure from Falmouth, on coming as usual on the deck, I found that we were sailing almost close under "the Rock of Lisbon," which breasts the vale of Cintra. It is a stupendous mountain of rock, extending very far into the sea, and rising to a dizzy height above it. The sides are broken into huge precipices and caverns of various and grotesque forms, are covered with dark moss, or exhibit naked stones blackened with a thousand storms. The top consists of an unequal ridge of apparently shivered rock, sometimes descending in jagged lines, and at others rising into sharp, angular and pointed pyramids, which seem to strike into the clouds. What a feeling does such a monument excite, shapeless, rugged, and setting all form at defiance—when the heart feels that it has outlived a thousand generations of perishable man, and belongs to an antiquity compared with which the wonders of Egypt are modern! It seems like the unhewn citadel of a giant race; the mighty wreck of an older and more substantial world.

Leaving the steeps and everlasting recesses of this huge mass, we passed the coasts of Portugal. The fields lying near the shore appeared for the most part barren, though broken into gentle undulations, and adorned with large spreading mansions and neat villages. A pleasant breeze brought us soon to the mouth of the Tagus, where a scene of enchantment, "too bright and fair almost for remembrance," burst upon my view. We sailed between the two fortresses which guard the entrance of the river, here several miles in width, close to the walls of that on the left, denominated "Fort St. Julian." The river, seen up to the beautiful castle of Belem, lay before us, not serpentine nor perceptibly contracting, but between almost parallel shores, like a noble avenue of crystal. It was studded with vessels of every region, as the sky is sprinkled with stars, which rested on a bosom of waters so calm as scarcely to be curled by the air which wafted us softly onwards. On both sides, the shore rose into a series of hills on the right side, wild, abrupt, mazy, and tangled, and on the left, covered with the freshest verdure and interspersed with luxuriant trees. Noble seats appeared crowning the hills and sloping on their sides; and in the spaces between the elevated spots, glimpses were caught of sweet valleys winding among scattered woods, or of princely domes and spires in the richness of the distance. All wore, not the pale livery of an opening spring, but the full bloom of maturest summer. The transition to such a scene, sparkling in the richest tints of sunshine and overhung by a cloudless sky of the deepest blue, from the scanty and just-budding foliage of Cornwall, as I left it, was like the change of a Midsummer Night's Dream; a sudden admission into fairy worlds. As we glided up the enchanted channel, the elevations on the left became overspread with magnificent buildings, like mingled temples and palaces, rising one above another into segments of vast amphitheatres, and interspersed with groves of the fullest yet most delicate green. Close to the water lay a barbaric edifice, of rich though fantastic architecture, a relic of Moorish grandeur, now converted into the last earthly abode of the monarchs of Portugal. Hence the buildings continued to thicken over the hills and to assume a more confused, though scarcely less romantic aspect, till we anchored in front of the most populous part of Lisbon. The city was stretched beyond the reach of the eye, on every side, upon the ascents and summits of very lofty and steep elevations. The white houses, thickly intersected with windows, mostly framed with green and white lattice-work, seemed to have their foundations on the tops of others: terraces appeared lifted far above the lofty buildings, and other edifices rose above them; gardens looked as suspended by magic in the clouds, and the whole scene wore an aspect of the most gorgeous confusion —"all bright and glittering in the smokeless air." We landed, and the enchantment vanished, at least for a season. Very narrow streets, winding in ceaseless turnings over steep ascents and declivities, paved only with sharp flints, and filthy beyond compare, now seemed to form the interior of the promised elysium. Nature and the founders of the city appeared to have done their best to render the spot a paradise, and modern generations their worst to reduce it to a sink of misery.

Lisbon, like ancient Rome, is built on at least seven hills. It is fitted by situation to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Seated, or rather enthroned on such a spot, commanding a magnificent harbour, and overlooking one of the noblest rivers of Europe, it might be more distinguished for external beauty than Athens in the days of her freedom. Now it seems rather to be the theatre in which the two great powers of deformity and loveliness are perpetually struggling for the mastery. The highest admiration and the most sickening disgust alternately prevail in the mind of the beholder. Never was there so strange an intermixture of the mighty and the mean—of the pride of wealth and the abject-ness of poverty—of the memorials of greatness and the symbols of low misery—of the filthy and the romantic. I will dwell, however, on the fair side of the picture; as I envy not those who delight in exhibiting the frightful or the gloomy, in the moral or the natural world. Often after traversing dark and wretched streets, at a sudden turn, a prospect of inimitable beauty bursts on the eye of the spectator. He finds himself, perhaps, on the brink of a mighty hollow scooped out by nature amidst hills, all covered to the tops with edifices, save where groves of the freshest verdure are interspersed; or on one side, a mountain rises into a cone far above the city, tufted with woods and crowned with some castellated pile, the work of other days. The views fronting the Tagus are still more extensive and grand. On one of these I stumbled a few evenings after my arrival, which almost suspended the breath with wonder. I had laboured through a steep and narrow street almost choked with dirt, when a small avenue on one side, apparently more open, tempted me to step aside to breathe the fresher air. I found myself on a little plot of ground, hanging apparently in the air, in the front of one of the churches. I stood against the column of the portico absorbed in delight and wonder. Before me lay a large portion of the city—houses descended beneath houses, sinking almost precipitously to a fearful depth beneath me, whose frameworks, covered over with vines of delicate green, broke the ascent like prodigious steps, by which a giant might scale the eminence—the same "wilderness of building" filled up the vast hollow, and rose by a more easy slope to the top of the opposite hills, which were crowned with turrets, domes, mansions, and regal pavilions of a dazzling whiteness—beyond the Tagus, on the southern shore, the coast rose into wild and barren hills, wearing an aspect of the roughest sublimity and grandeur—and, in the midst, occupying the bosom of the great vale, close between the glorious city and the unknown wilds, lay the calm and majestic river, from two to three miles in width, seen with the utmost distinctness to its mouth, on each side of which the two castles which guard it were visible, and spread over with a thousand ships—onward yet farther, far as the eye could reach, the living ocean was glistening, and ships, like specks of the purest white, were seen crossing it to and fro, giving to the scene an imaginary extension, by carrying the mind with them to far-distant shores. It was the time of sunset, and clouds of the richest saffron rested on the bosom of the air, and were reflected in softer tints in the waters. Not a whisper reached the ear. "The holy time was quiet as a nun breathless with adoration." The scene looked like some vision of blissful enchantment, and I scarcely dared to stir or breathe lest it should vanish away.

The eastern quarter of Lisbon, which is chiefly built since the great earthquake, stands almost on level ground; and, though surrounded by steep hills, with trees among their precipices, and aerial terraces on their summits, is not in itself very singular or romantic. A square of noble extent, open on the south to the Tagus, which here spreads out into a breadth of many miles, so as to wear almost the appearance of an inland lake, forms the southern part of this modern city. At the south-eastern angle, close to the river, stands the Exchange, which is a square white building, of no particular beauty or size. The sides of the square are occupied with dull-looking white buildings, which are chiefly offices of state, excepting, indeed, that the plan is incompletely executed, as the unfinished state of the western range of edifices sadly evinces. In the centre is an equestrian statue of King Joseph, on a scale so colossal that the image of Charles on horseback at Charing Cross would appear a miniature by its side. From the northern side of this quadrangle run three streets, narrow but built in perfect uniformity, and of more than a quarter of a mile in length, which connect it with another square called the Rocio, of nearly similar magnitude and proportions. The houses in these streets are white, of five stories in height, with shops, more resembling cells than the brilliant repositories of Cheapside, in the lower departments, and latticed windows in the upper stories.—They have on both sides elevated pathways for foot passengers, neatly paved with blocks of stone, and leaving space for two carriages to pass in the centre. The Rocio is surrounded on three sides with houses resembling those in the streets, and on the north by a range of building belonging to the Inquisition, the subterranean prisons of which extend far beneath the square. A little onward to the north of this area, amidst filthy suburbs, stands the public garden of the city. It is an oblong piece of ground, of considerable extent, surrounded by high walls, but always open at proper hours to the public. It is planted with high trees of the most delicate green, which, however, do not form a mass of impervious shade, but afford many spots of the thickest shelter, and give room for the play of the warm sunbeams, and for the contemplation of the stainless sky. The garden is laid out with more regularity than taste: one broad walk runs completely through it from north to south, on each side of which, beneath the loftier shade, are tall hedge-rows, solid masses of green, cut into the exactest parallelograms. The equal spaces on each side of the middle walk are intersected by similar hedge-rows—sometimes curving into an open circle, surrounded with circular trenches; at others, enclosing an angular space, railed in and cultivated with flowers, and occasionally expanding into shapes yet more fantastic.—There is no intricacy, no beautiful wildness in the scene—"half the platform just reflects the other" in the minutest features—but the green is so fresh and so abundant, and the air so delicately fragrant, that this garden forms a retreat in the warmth of summer which seems almost elysian.

There are two small places of public amusement in Lisbon, where dramatic pieces are performed, chiefly taken from the Spanish. The "legitimate drama," however, is of little attraction, compared with the wonderful contortions and rope-dancings which these houses exhibit, and which are truly surprising. The Opera House, called the Theatre San Carlos, is, except on a few particular occasions, almost deserted. The audiences are usually so thin, that it is not usual to light up the body of the house, except on particular days, when the rare illumination is duly announced in the bills. I visited it fortunately on the birth-day of the king, which is one of the most splendid of its festivals. Its interior is not much smaller than that of Covent Garden Theatre, though it appears at the first glance much less, from the extreme beauty of the proportions. The form is that of an ellipse, exquisitely turned, intersected at the farther extremity by the stage. The sides are occupied by five tiers of boxes, at least in appearance, for the upper circles, which are appropriated to the populace by way of gallery, are externally uniform with the rest of the theatre. The prevailing colour is white; the ornaments between the boxes, consisting of harps and tasteful devices, are of brown and gold, and elegantly divided into compartments by rims of burnished gold. The middle of the house is occupied by the grand entrance into the pit, the royal box, and the gallery above it, which is in continuation of the higher circle. The royal box is from twelve to fifteen feet in length, and occupies in height the space of three rows of the common boxes. Above are the crown and regal arms in burnished gold, and the sides are supported by statues of the same radiant appearance. Curtains of green silk, of a fine texture, usually conceal its internal splendours; but on this occasion they were drawn aside at the same moment that the stage was discovered, and displayed the interior illuminated with great brilliancy. This seat of royalty is divided into two stories—a slight gallery being thrown over the back part of it. Its ground is a deep crimson; the top descends towards the back in a beautiful concave, representing a rich veil of ermine. In the front of the lower compartment, behind the seats, is the crown of Portugal, figured on deep green velvet; and the sides are adorned with elegant mirrors. The centre of the roof of the theatre is an ellipse, painted to represent the sky with the moon and stars visible; the sides sloping to the upper boxes are of white adorned with gold and crimson. The stage is supported on each side by two pillars of the composite order, of white and gold, half in relief, with a brazen statue between each of them. It forms an excellent framework for a dramatic picture. The most singular feature of the house is a clock over the centre of the stage, which regularly strikes the hours, without mercy. What a noble invention this for the use of those who contend for the *unity of time!* How nicely would it enable the French critics to estimate the value of a tragedy at a single glance! How accurately might the time be measured out in which eternal attachments should be formed, conspiracies planned, and states overthrown; how might the passions of the soul be regulated to a minute, and the rise and swell of the great emotions of the heart determined to a hair; with what accuracy might the moments which the heroes have yet to live be counted out like those of culprits at the Old Bailey! What huge criticisms of Corneille and Voltaire would that little instrument supply! What volumes, founded on its movements, would it render superfluous! Even Grecian regularity must yield before it, and criticism triumph, by this invariable standard, at once over Sophocles and Shakspeare.

The scenery was wretched—the singers tolerable—and the band excellent. The ballet took place between the acts of the opera, and was spun out to great length. The dancing consisted partly of wonderful twirlings of the French school, and partly of the more wonderful contortions of the Portuguese; both kinds exceedingly clever, but exhibiting very little of true beauty, grace, or elegance. At the close of the first act, a perfect shower of roses, pinks, and carnations, together with printed sonnets, was poured down from the top of the theatre in honour of his majesty, whose absence, however, even Portuguese loyalty cannot pardon.

The churches are the most remarkable of the public buildings of Lisbon; though plain on the outside, they are exceedingly splendid in the interior. The tutelary saints are richer than many Continental princes, though their treasures are only displayed to excite the reverence or the cupidity of the people on high and festal occasions. The most beautiful, though not the largest of the churches which I have examined, is that of the Estrella, which is lined with finely-varied and highly-polished marble, vaulted over with a splendid and sculptured roof, and adorned, in its gilded recesses, with beautiful pictures. Were it not, indeed, for the impression made on me by one of the latter, I should scarcely have mentioned this edifice, unable as I am technically to describe it. The piece to which I allude is not, that I can discover, held in particular estimation, or the production of any celebrated artist; but it excited in me feelings of admiration and delight, which can never die away. It represents Saint John in the Isle of Patmos, gazing on the vision in which the angels are pouring forth the vials, and with the pen in his hand, ready to commit to sacred and imperishable record the awful and mysterious scenes opened before him. Never did I behold or imagine such a figure. He is sitting, half entranced with wonder at the revelation disclosed to him, half mournfully conscious of the evils which he is darkly to predict to a fated and unheeding world. The face, in its mere form and colouring, is most beautiful: its features are perfectly lovely, though inclining rather to cherubic roundness than Grecian austerity, and its roseate bloom of youth is gently touched and softened by the feelings attendant on the sad and holy vocation of the beloved disciple. The head is bent forward, in eagerness, anxiety, and reverence; the eyebrows arched in wonder, yet bearing in every line some undefinable expression of pity; the eyes are uplifted, and beaming with holy inspiration, yet mild, soft, angelical; around the exquisitely-formed mouth, sweet tenderness for the inevitable sorrows of mankind are playing; and the bright chestnut hair, falling in masses over the shoulders, gives to all this expression of high yet soft emotion, a finishing grace and completeness. This figure displays such unspeakable sweetness tempering such prophetic fire; such religious and saintly purity, mingled with so genial a compassion; it is at once so individual and so ideal; so bordering on the celestial, and yet so perfectly within the range of human sympathies; that it is difficult to say, whether the delicious emotions which it inspires partake most of wonder or of love. The image seemed, like sweet music, to sink into the soul, there to remain for ever. To see such a piece is really to be made better and happier. The recollection is a precious treasure for the feelings and the imagination, of which nothing, while they endure, can deprive them.

The church at Belem, a fortified place on the Tagus, three or four miles from Lisbon, where the kings and royal family of Portugal have, for many generations, been interred, must not be forgotten. It is one of the most ancient buildings in the kingdom, having originally been erected by the Romans, and splendidly adorned by the Moorish sovereigns. Formed of white stone, it is now stained to a reddish brown by the mere influence of years, and frowns over the water "cased in the unfeeling armour of old time." Its shape is oblong, its sides of gigantic proportions, and its massive appearance most grand and awe-inspiring. The principal entrance is by a deep archway, reaching to a great height, and circular within, ornamented above and around with the most crowded, venerable, and yet fantastic devices—martyrs and heroes of chivalry—swords and crosiers—monarchs and saints—crosses and sceptres—"the roses and flowers of kings" and the sad emblems of mortality—all wearing the stamp of deep antiquity, all appearing carved out of one eternal rock, and promising by their air of solid grandeur to survive as many stupendous changes as those which have already left them unshaken. The interior of this venerable edifice is not less awe-breathing or substantial. Eight huge pillars of barbaric architecture, and covered all over with strange figures and grotesque ornaments in relievo, support the roof, which is white, ponderous, and of a noble simplicity, being only divided into vast square compartments by the beams which cross it. Such a pile, devoted to form the last resting-place of a line of kings who have, each in his brief span of time, held the fate of millions at his pleasure, cannot fail to excite solemn and pensive thought. And yet what are the feelings thus excited, to those meditations to which the great repository of the illustrious deceased in England invites us! Here we think of nothing but the perishableness of man in his best estate—the emptiness of human honours—the low and frail nature of all the distinctions of earth. A race of monarchs occupy but a narrow vault: they were kings, and now are dust; and this idea forced home upon us, makes us feel that the most potent and enduring of worldly things—thrones, dynasties, and the peaceable succession of high families—are but as feeble shadows. We learn only to feel our weakness. But in the sacred place where all that could perish of our orators, philosophers, and poets, is reposing, we feel our mortality only to lend us a stronger and more ethereal sense of our eternal being. Life and death seem met together, as in a holy fane, in peaceful concord. While we feel that the mightiest must yield to the stern law of necessity, we know that the very monuments which record the decay of their outward frame, are so many proofs and symbols that they shall never really expire. We feel that those whose remembrance is thus extended beyond the desolating power of the grave, over whose *fame* death and mortal accidents have no power, are not themselves destroyed. And when we recollect the more indestructible monuments of their genius, those works, which live not only in the libraries of the studious, but in the hearts and imaginations of men; we are conscious at once, that the spirit which conceived, and the souls which appreciate and love them, are not of the earth, earthy. Our thoughts are not wholly of humiliation and sorrow! but stretch forward, with a pensive majesty, into the permanent and the immortal.

Having inspected the city, I was naturally anxious to visit the celebrated *Aqueduct*, which is carried across a deep valley two or three miles from Lisbon. Having passed the suburbs, and reached the open country, I saw, at a sudden turn in the pathway, the mighty object of my wanderings. I found myself on the summit of a gently sloping declivity, at a little distance from the foot of which a hill rose to an equal height, with a bold and luxuriant sweep. It is across the expanse thus formed, that the stupendous bridge runs, in two straight lines from each eminence, which form an obtuse angle in the centre. The whole is supported by thirty-six arches, which, as the ground from each extremity sinks, increase in height, or rather depth, till in the middle of the pile, the distance to which they ascend from the vale is fearful. This huge structure is composed of dark gray stone, the deep colour of which gives to its massiveness an air of the sternest grandeur. The water is conveyed across the level thus formed, through a chain of building which occupies its centre, and appears almost like a line of solid and unbroken rock. Above this erection, turrets of still greater height, and of the same materials, are reared at regular intervals, and crown the whole. The road is thus divided into two passes, which are secured by high ridges of stone, in the long, uninterrupted straight lines, which have an air of so awful a grandeur in the noblest remains of Roman art. The view from the southern road, though romantic, is, for the most part, confined within narrow boundaries, as rugged hills arise on this side almost from the foot of the Aqueduct, to a height far above its towers, cultivated only towards the lower parts, and covered on the loftier spots with a thin grass and shapeless blocks or masses of granite. This mountainous ridge breaks, however, in the centre, and abruptly displays a piece of the Tagus, like an inland lake, with its tenderly rimpled blue, and the wild and lofty banks which rise precipitously beyond it. As the sun was declining when I traversed this path, the portion of craggy shore thus disclosed, and the shrubs which flourish among its steeps, were overcast with the richest tints from the west, and the vessels gently gliding through the opening made by the shaggy declivities of the nearer hills, completed the feeling of genial composure diffused over the scene. From the northern side, the prospect appears arrayed in far gayer charms. The valley here, from the narrow point at which it is seen, spreads out into a fanlike form, till the eminences on each side seem gradually to melt away, and the open country lies in full expanse to the view. It is a scene of fresh, reposing, and perfect beauty. Not an angular intersection breaks the roundness, or interrupts the grace, which characterize the whole. The hills in the foreground sink from each side of the Aqueduct, gradually to the depth of the vale, covered with the freshest verdure, fluctuating in a wave-like motion; and the more distant landscape appears composed of a thousand gentle undulations, thrown up by Nature in her sweetest mood, as though the earth were swelling with an exuberant bounty, even to the rim of the circling sky, with the form of which all is harmonious. The green in which the prospect is clothed, is of a softer and more vivid hue than in England; the pastures seem absolutely to sparkle on the eye; and, amidst this "splendour in the grass, this glory in the flower," the lively groves of orange and the villas of purest white scattered thickly around, give to the picture a fairy brightness. And yet, setting individual associations aside, I prefer the scenery of my own country to this enchanted vale. This is a landscape to visit as a spectacle, not to live in. There is no solemnity about it,—no austere beauty,—no retiring loveliness; there are no grand masses of shade,—no venerable oaks, which seem coeval with the hills over which they cast their shadows,—no vast colonnades, in which the fine spirit of the elder time seems yet to keep its state. Nature wears not the pale livery which inspires meditation or solemn joy; her face seems wreathed in a perpetual smile. The landscape breathes, indeed, of intoxicating delight; it invites to present joy; but it leads to no tender reminiscences of the past, nor gives solemn indications of the future. It is otherwise in the very *deficiencies*, as they are usually regarded, of our happier land. There "the pale primrose that dies unmarried" among the scanty hedge-rows, as an emblem of innocence peeping forth amidst a cheerless world, suggests more pensive yet delicious musing, than the gaudiest productions of this brighter clime. The wild roses, thinly interspersed among our thickets, with their delicate colouring and faint perfume, afford images of rustic modesty, far sweeter and more genial than the rich garlands which cluster here. Those "echoes from beyond the grave," which come to us amid the stillness of forests which have outlived generations of men, are here unheard. In these valleys we are dazzled, surprised, enchanted;—in ours we are moved with solemn yet pleasing thoughts, which "do often lie too deep for tears."

Having traversed both sides of the aqueduct, I resolved to ascend one of the hills beyond it, for the purpose of obtaining a still more extensive view. After a most weary ascent, of which my eye had taken a very inadequate estimate, I reached the summit and was amply rewarded for my toils. To the north lay the prospect which I have endeavoured to describe, softened in the distance; beneath was the huge pile, with its massive arches and lone turrets bridging the vale. To the south was the Tagus, and, a little onward, its entrance, where it gently blended with the sea. Completely round the north-eastern side of the horizon, the same mighty and beautiful river appeared flowing on far beyond Lisbon in a noble curve, which seemed to dissolve in the lighter blue of the heavens. And full to the west beyond the coast of Portugal, now irradiated with the most brilliant colouring, was the free and circling ocean, on which amidst visionary shapes of orange and saffron glory, the sun was, for his last moment, resting. Soon the sky became literally "fretted with golden fire," and the hills seemed covered with a tender haze of light, which rendered them yet lovelier. The moon began to blend her mild radiance with the sweet twilight, as I took the last glance at the vale, and hastened to Lisbon.

On Thursday, the 21st of May, a grand festival was holden in honour of Saint George, who is held in peculiar reverence in Lisbon. On this most sacred occasion, all the buildings around the vast area of the Rocio were hung with crimson tapestry; a road was formed of fine gravel, guarded by lines of soldiers; and the troops, to a great number, in splendid uniforms, occupied the most conspicuous passages. When all was prepared, the train issued from a church in one of the angles of the square, and slowly paraded round the path prepared for it. It consisted of all the ecclesiastical orders, attired in their richest vestments, and bearing, alternately, crosses of gold and silver; canopies of white, purple, orange, and crimson silk, bordered with deep fringes; and gorgeous banners, decorated with curious devices. The canopy which floated over the consecrated wafer, formerly borne by the king and the princes, was, on this occasion, carried by the chief persons of the regency. But the most remarkable object was the *Saint himself*, who, "not to speak it profanely," is no other than a wooden figure, and, I am afraid, must yield in proportion and in grace to that unconsecrated work, the *Apollo Belvidere*. He was seated on a noble horse, and arrayed in a profusion of gems, which, according to the accounts of the Portuguese, human power could hardly calculate. His boots were of solid silver; his whole person begirt with jewels, and his hat glittered in the sun like one prodigious diamond. He descended in state from the castle to the church, whence the procession issued, and remained there during the solemnities. He was saluted on leaving his mansion, with a discharge of artillery, and received the same compliment on his return to that favoured residence. The people, who were of course assembled in great crowds, did not appear to me to look on the magnificent display before them with any feeling of religious awe, or to regard it in any other light than, at the most, a national spectacle.

Of the national character of the Portuguese in general, I can say very little, as my personal intercourse with them was extremely limited. Were I to believe all that some English residents in Lisbon have told me, I should draw a gloomy picture of human degradation unrelieved by a single redeeming grace. I should say that the common people are not only ignorant and filthy, but universally dishonest; that they blend the vices of savage and social life, and are ready to become either pilferers or assassins; that they are cruel to their children, lax in friendship, and implacable in revenge; that the higher orders are at once the dupes and tyrants of their servants, familiar with them one moment, and brutally despotic the next; that they are in constant jealousy of their wives, and not without reason; and that even their vices are without dignity or decorum. *All this can never be true*, or Lisbon would not be subsisting in order and peace. To me, the inhabitants appear in a more amiable light. Filthy and ignorant the common people doubtless are; but they are *sober*; and those dreadful excesses and sorrows which arise from the use, in England, of ardent spirits, are consequently unknown. They are idle; but the warmth of the climate may, in some degree, excuse them. No rank is destitute of some appearance of native courteousness. The rich are not, indeed, Howards or Clarksons; they have no idea of exerting themselves to any great degree, to draw down blessings on the heads of others or their own; they do not go in search of wretchedness in order to remove it, but when misery is brought before them, as it is constantly here, in a thousand ghastly forms, they are far from withholding such aid as money can render. The gardens of their country villas, which are exceedingly elegant, are always open in the evenings to any of the populace who choose to walk there, so that the citizen, on the numerous holidays which the Romish church affords, is not compelled to inhale the dust in some wretched tea-garden, which is a libel at once on nature and art, but may rove with his children through groves of orange and thickets of roses. When the company thus indulged meet any of the family which reside in the mansion, they acknowledge the favour which they are enjoying by obeisances not ungracefully made, which are always returned with equal courtesy. I am assured, that this privilege is never abused; even the children walk amidst the flowers and the fruits, without the slightest idea of touching them. This circumstance alone would induce me to doubt the justice with which some have attempted to fix the brand of dishonesty on the inferior classes of Portugal. The people want not the natural tenderness and gentle movements of the heart; all their deficiencies arise from the absence of high principle, the languishing of intellect, and the decay of the loftier powers and energies which dignify man. They have no enthusiasm, no devoted admiration, or love, for objects unconnected with the necessities of their mortal being, or the low gratifications of sense. They have a few mighty names to lend them an inspiration, which might supply the place of contemporary genius; and with those, of which they ought to be fond in proportion to their rarity, they appear scarcely acquainted. Of the rich stores of poetry and romance, which they might enjoy from the neighbouring country and almost similar language of Spain, they are, for the most part, unconscious. Not only has the spirit of chivalry departed from these mountains, where it once was glowing; but its marvellous and golden tales are neglected or forgotten.

The degradation of the public mind in Lisbon is increased by the notorious venality of the ministers of justice. There is no crime for which indemnity may not be purchased by a bribe. Even offences against the government of the king may be winked at, if the culprit is able to make an ample pecuniary sacrifice. It is a well-known fact that some of the chief conspirators in the plot to assassinate Marshal Beresford, and change the whole order of things in Portugal, were able to make their peace with the judges, and, on the ground of some technical informality, were dismissed without trial. When any one is accused of an offence, he is generally sent at once to prison, where he remains until he can purchase his freedom. There does not seem, however, any disposition to persecution for opinions, or to exercise wanton cruelty. The Inquisition is no longer an engine in the hands of the priests, but is merely a tribunal for the examination and the punishment of political offences. Death is rarely inflicted; for it brings no gain to the magistrate. Criminals guilty of the highest offences are kept in prison until they are forgotten, without any one knowing or caring about their fate. In the absence of the sovereign almost all the civil authorities have become totally corrupted, for there is no patriot to watch, and no public voice to awe them. The people appear sunk in apathy to all excepting gain; and the greater number of them crawl on with little hope, except to supply the cravings of hunger. The city, notwithstanding its populousness, exhibits all the marks of decay—buildings in ruins amidst its stateliest streets, and houses begun on a magnificent scale, and left unfinished for years. The foreign merchants, especially the British, who use it as a central port, give it an artificial life, without which its condition would be most wretched. In bidding farewell to this bright abode of degraded humanity, I felt it impossible to believe that it was destined gradually to become desolate and voiceless. Glorious indeed would be the change, if knowledge should expand the souls now so low and contracted, into a sympathy with the natural wonders around them—if the arts should once more adorn the romantic city—and the orange groves and lovely spots among the delicate cork trees, should be vocal with the innocent gayety of happy peasants, or shed their influences on the hearts of youthful bards. If, indeed, the people were awakened into energy, and their spirit was regulated by wise and beneficent governors, the capital of Portugal would assuredly become the fairest of cities.

MR. CHARLES LLOYD'S POEMS.*

[LONDON MAGAZINE.]

There is no more remarkable instance of the "cant of criticism," than the representation currently received as distinctive, whereby several authors, chiefly residing in the neighbourhood of the lakes, were characterized as belonging to one school of poetry. In truth, propinquity of residence, and the bonds of private friendship, are the only circumstances which have ever given the slightest colour to the hypothesis which marked them out as disciples of the same creed. It is scarcely possible to conceive individuals more dissimilar in the objects of their choice, or in the essential properties of their genius. Who, for example, can have less in common than Wordsworth and Coleridge, if we except those faculties which are necessarily the portion of the highest order of imaginative minds? The former of these has sought for his subjects among the most ordinary occurrences of life, which he has dignified and exalted, from which he has extracted the holiest essences of good, or over which he has cast a consecrating and harmonizing light "which never was by sea or land." The latter, on the other hand, has spread abroad his mighty mind, searching for his materials through all history and all science, penetrating into the hidden soul of the wildest superstitions, and selecting the richest spoils of time from the remotest ages. Wordsworth is all intensity—he sees nothing, but through the hallowing medium of his own soul, and represents all things calm, silent, and harmonious as his own perceptions. Coleridge throws himself into all the various objects which he contemplates, and attracts to his own imagery their colours and forms. The first, seizes only the mighty and the true with a giant grasp;—the last has a passionate and almost effeminate love of beauty and tenderness which he never loses. One looks only on the affections in their inmost home, while the other perceives them in the lightest and remotest tints, which they cast on objects the strangest and most barbarous. All the distinction, in short, between the intense and the expansive—the severe and the lovely—the philosophic and the magical—really separates these great poets, whom it has been the fashion to censure as united in one heresy. If we cast the slightest glance at Southey's productions, we shall find him unlike either of these, his associates—offering a child-like feebleness in contrast to Wordsworth's nerve—and ranging through mythologies and strange fantasies, not only with less dominion than Coleridge, but merely portraying the shapes to which they gave existence, instead of discovering the spirit of truth and beauty within them. Nor does the author before us, often combined with these by the ignorance or the artifice of criticism, differ less widely from them. Without Wordsworth's intuitive perception of the profoundest truths, or Coleridge's feeling of beauty, he has a subtile activity of mind which supplies the place of the first, and a wonderful power of minute observation, which, when directed to lovely objects, in a great degree produces the effect of the latter. All these three rise on some occasions to the highest heaven of thought and feeling, though by various processes—Wordsworth reaching it at once by the divine wingedness of his genius—Coleridge ascending to it by a spiral track of glory winding on through many a circuit of celestial light—and Lloyd stepping thither by a firm ladder, like that of Jacob, by even steps, which the feet of angels have trodden!

The peculiar qualities of Mr. Lloyd's genius have never been so clearly developed as in the chief poem of the work before us. In his "Nugæ Canoræ," all his thoughts and feelings were overcast by a gentle melancholy, which rendered their prominences less distinct, as it shed over them one sad and sober hue. Even, however, in his most pensive moods, the vigorous and restless activity of his intellect might be discerned, curiously inquiring for the secret springs of its own distress, and regarding its sorrows as high problems worthy of the most painful scrutiny. While he exhibited to us the full and pensive stream of emotion, with all the images of soft clouds and delicate foliage reflected on its bosom, he failed not to conduct us to its deep-seated fountains, or to lay open to our view the jagged caverns within its banks. Yet here the vast intellectual power was less conspicuous than in his last poems, because the personal emotion was more intense, single, and pervading. He is now, we rejoice to observe, more "i' the sun," and consequently, the nice workings of his reason are set more distinctly before us. The "Desultory Thoughts in London" embrace a great variety of topics, associated in the mind of the author with the metropolis, but many of them belonging to those classes of abstraction which might as fitly be contemplated in a

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Desultory Thoughts in London. Titus and Gisippus, with other Poems. By Charles Lloyd, author of Nugæ Canoræ, and translator of Alfieri's Tragedies, 12mo, 1821.

desert. Among these are "Fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute,"—the theories of manners and morals—the doctrines of expediency and self-interest—with many speculations relating to the imaginative parts of literature, and the influences of religion upon them—all of which are grasped by the hand of a master. The whole range of controversial writing scarcely affords an example of propositions stated so lucidly, qualified so craftily, and urged with such exemplary fairness and candour as in this work. It must, indeed, be admitted, that the admirable qualities of the argument render it somewhat unfit for marriage "with immortal verse." Philosophical poetry, when most attractive, seizes on some grand elemental truths, which it links to the noblest material images, and seeks rather to send one vast sentiment to the heart through the medium of the imagination, than to lead the mind by a regular process of logic, to the result which it contemplates. Mere didactic poetry, as Pope's Essay on Man, succeeds not by the nice balance of reasons, but by decking out some obvious common-place in a gorgeous rhetoric, or by expressing a familiar sentiment in such forcible language as will give it a singular charm to all who have felt its justice in a plainer garb. In general, the poet, no less than the woman, who deliberates, is lost. But Mr. Lloyd's effusions are in a great measure exceptions to this rule;—for though they are sometimes "harsh and crabbed," and sometimes too minute, they are marked by so hearty an earnestness, and adorned by such variety of illustration, and imbued with such deep sentiment, that they often enchant while they convince us. Although his processes are careful, his results belong to the stateliest range of truths. His most laborious reasonings lead us to elevated views of humanity—to the sense of a might above reason itself—to those objects which have inspired the most glorious enthusiasm, and of which the profoundest bards have delighted to afford us glimpses. It is quite inspiring to follow him as he detects the inconsistencies of worldly wisdom, as he breaks the shallow reasonings of the advocates of expediency into pieces, or as he vindicates their prerogatives to faith and hope. He leads us up a steep and stony ascent, step by step; but cheers us by many a ravishing prospect by the way, and conducts at last to an eminence, not only above the mists of error, but where the rainbow comes, and whence the gate of heaven may be seen as from the Delectable Mountains which Bunyan's Pilgrim visited.

We scarcely know how to select a specimen which shall do justice to an author whose speculations are too vast to be completed within a short space, and are connected with others by delicate links of thought. We will give, however, his vindication of the enthusiastic and self-denying spirit, which, however associated with absurdity, is the soul of all religion and virtue.

Reasoners, that argue of ye know not what,
Do not, as mystical, my strain deride:
By facts' criterion be its doctrine tried.
The blind as well might doubt of sense and sight:
Peruse their lives, who thus have vow'd pursuit
Of heavenly communion: in despite
Of all your arguments ye can't dispute
Their singleness of heart: except ye fight
'Gainst facts, ye, self-convicted, must be mute.
Will ye deny, that they've a secret found
To baffle fate, and heal each mortal wound?

Will ye deny, to them alone 'tis given,
Who its existence, as a faith, embraced?
'Tis mainly requisite, to partake of heaven,
That the heart's treasures there should first be placed.
According to thy faith shall it be given
To thee, with spiritual glories, to be graced.
As well all facts whence man experience hath,
As doubt immunities bound up in faith.

'Tis easy thing to say, that men are knaves;
'Tis easy thing to say, that men are fools;
'Tis easy thing to say, an author raves;
Easy, to him who always ridicules
The incomprehensible, to allege—and saves
Trouble of farther thought—that oft there rules
Fanatic feeling in a madman's brain:
That half-pretence oft ekes out half-insane.

We know all this; but we know also well,
These men we speak of tried by every test
Admissible, all other men excel
In virtue, and in happiness. Since bless'd
Are they, stern Fate, spite of thy direst spell:
Infection, loathsome maladies, each pest
And plague,—for these have they,—should they assail
A panacea which will never fail.

God is their rock, their fortress of defence,
In time of trouble, a defence most holy;
For them the wrath of man is impotence;
His pride, a bubble; and his wisdom, folly.
That "peace" have they—unspeakable intense,—
"Which passeth understanding!" Melancholy
Life's gauds to them: the unseen they explore:
Rooted in heaven, to live is—to adore!

Ye, that might cavil at these humble lays,
Peruse the page of child-like Fenelon:
Hear what the wrapped, transfigured Guion says
With ills of body such as few have known;—
Tedious imprisonment; in youthful days
To luxuries used, they all aside are thrown;
To poverty devoted, she defies
Its sorest ills, blessing the sacrifice.

Was e'er an instance known, that man could taste
True peace of mind, and spurn religion's laws?
In other things were this *alliance* traced;
Constant *coincidence*; effect, and cause,
We scruple not to call them; or, at least,
Condition indispensable, whence draws
The one, the other. This *coincidence*
But grant me *here*;—and grant the consequence.

Facts, facts, are stubborn things! We trust the sense
Of sight, because the experience of each day
Warrants our trust in it. Now, tell me whence
It is, no mortal yet could dare to say,
Man trusted in his God for his defence,
And was confounded? cover'd with dismay?
Loses he friends? Religion dries his tears!
Loses he life? Religion calms his fears!

Loses he health? Religion balms his mind,
And pains of flesh seem ministers of grace,
And wait upon a rapture more refined,
Than e'en in lustiest health e'er found a place.
Loses he wealth? the pleasure *it* can *find*
He had before renounced; thus he can trace
No difference, but that now the *heart* bestows
What through a *hand* less *affluent scantier* flows.

He too as much enjoys the spectacle
Of good, when done by others as by him:

Loses he fame? the honour he loves well
Is not of earth, but that which seraphim
Might prize! Loses he liberty? his cell,
And all its vaults, echo his rapturous hymn:
He feels as free as freest bird in air!
His heaven-shrined spirit finds heaven everywhere!

'Tis not romance which we are uttering! No;
Thousands of volumes each word's truth attest!
Thousands of souls redeem'd from all below
Can bring a proof, that, e'en while earthly guest,
'Tis possible for man that *peace* to know,
Which maketh him impassive to the test
Of mortal sufferance! Many and many a martyr
Has found this bound up in religion's charter.

Pleasure, or philosophical or sensual,
Is not, ought not to be, man's primary rule;
We often feel bound by a law potential
To do those things which e'en our reasons fool.
God, and he only, sees the consequential;
The mind well nurtured in religion's school
Feels that *He* only—to whom all's obedient—
Has right to guide itself by the expedient.

Duty is man's first law, not satisfaction!
That satisfaction comes from *this* perform'd
We grant! But should this be the prime attraction
That led us to performance, soon inform'd
By finding that we've miss'd the meed of action,
We shall confess our error. Oft we're warm'd,
By a strong spirit we cannot restrain,
To deeds, which make all calculation vain.

Had Regulus reason'd, whether on the scale
Of *use*, in Rome, his faculties would *most*,
Or Carthage—patriotism's cause avail,
He never had resumed his fatal post.
Brutus, Virginius had they tried *by tale*
Their country's cause, had never been her boast.
Yet had it not these self-doom'd heroes seen,
Rome "the eternal city," ne'er had been!

Shall Christ submit upon the cross to bleed,
And man for all he does a reason ask?
Have martyrs died, and confessors, indeed,
That he must seek a *why* for every task?
If it be so, to prate we've little need
Of this *enlighten'd age!* Take off the mask!
If it be so, and ye'll find this our *proud age*,—
Its grand climacterick past is in its *dotage*.

Thy name, Thermopylæ, had ne'er been heard,
Were not the Greeks wiser than our wise men.
I grant, that heaven alone to man transferr'd,
When he would raise up states for history's pen,
This more than mortal instinct! Yet absurd
It is (because, perhaps, our narrower ken
Their heights cannot descry; yea, and a curse
'Twill bring) to make a *theory* of the worse.

A theory for a declining race!
No, let us keep at least our lips from lies;
If we have forfeited *Truth's soaring grace*,
Let us not *falsify* her *prodigies*.
We well may wear a blush upon our face,
From her past triumphs so t' apostatize
In deeds; but let us not with this invent
An infidelity of argument.

Go to Palmyra's ruins; visit Greece,
Behold! The wrecks of her magnificence
Seem left, in spite of man, thus to increase
The sting of satire on his impotence.
As to betray how soon man's glories cease;
Tombs, time defying, of the most pretence
But only make us feel with more surprise,
How mean the things they would immortalize!

The following is only a portion of a series of reminiscences equally luxurious and intense, and which are attended throughout by that vein of reflection which our author never loses:

Oh, were the eye of youth a moment ours!
When every flower that gemm'd the various earth
Brought down from Heaven enjoyment's genial showers!
And every bird, of everlasting mirth
Prophesied to us in romantic bowers!
Love was the garniture, whose blameless birth
Caused that each filmy web where dew-drops trembled,
The gossamery haunt of elves resembled!

We can remember earliest days of spring,
When violets blue and white, and primrose pale,
Like callow nestlings 'neath their mother's wing
Each peep'd from under the broad leaf's green veil.
When streams look'd blue; and thin clouds clustering
O'er the wide empyrean did prevail,
Rising like incense from the breathing world,
Whose gracious aspect was with dew impearl'd.

When a soft moisture, steaming everywhere,
To the earth's countenance mellower hues imparted;
When sylvan choristers self-poised in air,
Or perched on bows, in shrilly quiverings darted
Their little raptures forth; when the warm glare
(While glancing lights backwards and forwards started,
As if with meteors silver-sheathed 'twere flooded)
Sultry, and silent, on the hill's turf brooded.

Oh in these moments we such joy have felt,
As if the earth were nothing but a shrine;
Where all, or awe inspired or made one melt
Gratefully towards its architect divine!
Father! in future (as I once have dwelt
Within that very sanctuary of thine
When shapes, and sounds, seem'd as but modes of Thee!)
That with experience gain'd were heaven to me!

Oft in the fulness of the joy ye give,
Oh, days of youth! in summer's noon-tide hours,
Did I a depth of quietness receive
From insects' drowsy hum, that all my powers
Would baffle to portray! Let them that live
In vacant solitude, speak from their bowers
What nameless pleasures letter'd ease may cheer,
Thee, Nature! bless'd to mark with eye and ear:—

Who can have watch'd the wild rose' blushing dye,
And seen what treasures its rich cups contain;
Who, of soft shades the fine variety,
From white to deepest flush of vermeil stain?
Who, when impearl'd with dew-drop's radiancy
Its petals breathed perfume, while he did strain
His *very being*, lest the sense should fail
T' imbibe each sweet its beauties did exhale?

Who, amid lanes, on eve of summer days,
Which sheep brouse, could the thicket's wealth behold?
The fragrant honey-suckle's bowery maze?
The furze bush, with its vegetable gold?
In every satin sheath that helps to raise
The fox-glove's cone, the figures manifold
With such a dainty exquisiteness wrought?—
Nor grant that thoughtful love they all have taught?

The daisy, cowslip, each have to them given—
The wood anemone, the strawberry wild,
Grass of Parnassus, meek as star of even:—
Bright, as the brightening eye of smiling child,
And bathed in blue transparency of heaven,
Veronica; the primrose pale, and mild;—
Of charms (of which to speak no tongue is able)
Intercommunion incommunicable!

I had a cottage in a Paradise!
'Twere hard to enumerate the charms combined
Within the little space, greeting the eyes,
Its unpretending precincts that confined.
Onward, in front, a mountain stream did rise
Up, whose long course the fascinated mind
(So apt the scene to awaken wildest themes)
Might localize the most romantic dreams.

When winter torrents, by the rain and snow,
Surlily dashing down the hills, were fed,
Its mighty mass of waters seem'd to flow
With deafening course precipitous: its bed
Rocky, such steep declivities did show
That towards us with a rapid course it sped,
Broken by frequent falls; thus did it roam
In whirlpools eddying, and convulsed with foam.

Flank'd were its banks with perpendicular rocks,
Whose scars enormous, sometimes gray and bare,
And sometimes clad with ash and gnarled oaks,
The birch, the hazel, pine, and holly were.
Their tawny leaves, the sport of winters' shocks,
Oft o'er its channel circled in the air;
While, on their tops, and midway up them, seen,
Lower'd cone-like firs and yews in gloomiest green.

So many voices from this river came
In summer, winter, autumn, or the spring;
So many sounds accordant to each frame
Of Nature's aspect, (whether the storm's wing
Brooded on it, or pantingly, and tame,
The low breeze crisp'd its waters) that, to sing
Half of their tones, impossible! or tell
The listener's feelings from their viewless spell.

When fires gleam'd bright, and when the curtain'd room,
Well stock'd with books and music's implements,
When children's faces, dress'd in all the bloom
Of innocent enjoyments, deep content's
Deepest delight inspired; when nature's gloom
To the domesticated heart presents
(By consummate tranquillity possest)
Contrast, that might have stirr'd the dullest breast;

Yes,—in such hour as that—thy voice I've known,
Oh, hallow'd stream!—fitly so named—(since tones
Of deepest melancholy swell'd upon
The breeze that bore it)—fearful as the groans
Of fierce night spirits! Yes, when tapers shone
Athwart the room (when, from their skyey thrones
Of ice-piled height abrupt, rush'd rudely forth,
Riding the blast, the tempests of the North;)

Thy voice I've known to wake a dream of wonder!
For though 'twas loud, and wild with turbulence,
And absolute as is the deep-voiced thunder,
Such fine gradations mark'd its difference
Of audibility, one scarce could sunder
Its gradual swellings from the influence
Of harp Æolian, when, upon the breeze,
Floats in a stream its plaintive harmonies.

One might have thought, that spirits of the air
Warbled amid it in an undersong;
And oft one might have thought, that shrieks were there
Of spirits, driven for chastisement along
The invisible regions that above earth are.
All species seem'd of intonation (strong
To bind the soul, Imagination rouse,)
Conjured from preternatural prison-house.

But when the heavens are blue, and summer skies
Are pictured in thy wave's cerulean glances;
Then thy crisp stream its course so gayly plies,
Trips on so merrily in endless dances,
Such low sweet tone, fit for the time, does rise
From thy swift course, methinks, that it enhances
The hue of flowers which decorate thy banks,
While each one's freshness seems to pay thee thanks.

Solemn the mountains that the horizon close,
From whose drear verge thou seem'st to issue forth:
Sorcery might fitly dwell, one could suppose,
(Or any wondrous spell of heaven or earth,
Which e'en to name man's utterance not knows,)
Amid the forms that mark thy place of birth.
Thither direct your eye, and you will find
All that excites the imaginative mind!

The tale of Titus and Gisippus, which follows, while it is very interesting as a story, exhibits the same great intellectual power and ceaseless activity of thought, which characterize the Thoughts in London. Mr. Lloyd has taken the common incident of one lover resigning his mistress to another, and the names of his chief characters from Boccaccio, but, in all other respects, the poem is original. Its chief peculiarity is the manner in which it reasons upon all the emotions which it portrays, especially on the progress of love in the soul, with infinite nicety of discrimination, not unlike that which Shakspeare has manifested in his amatory poems. He accounts for the finest shade of feeling, and analyzes its essence, with the same care, as though he were demonstrating a proposition of Euclid. He is as minute in his delineation of all the variations of the heart, as Richardson was in his narratives of matters of fact;—and, like him, thus throws such an air of truth over his statements, that we can scarcely avoid receiving them as authentic history. At the same time, he conducts this process with so delicate a hand, and touches his subjects with so deep a reverence for humanity, that he teaches us to love our nature the more from his masterly dissection. By way of example of these remarks, we will give part of the scene between a lover who long has secretly been agitated by a passion for the betrothed mistress of his friend, and the object of his silent affection whom he has just rescued from a watery grave—though it is not perhaps the most beautiful passage of the poem:

He is on land; on safe land is he come:
Sophronia's head he pillows on a stone:
A death-like paleness hath usurp'd her bloom;
Her head falls lapsing on his shoulder. None
Were there to give him aid! He fears her doom
Is seal'd for evermore! At last a groan
Burst from her livid lips, and then the word
"Titus" he heard, or fancied that he heard!—

Where was he then? From death to life restored!
From hell to heaven! To rapture from despair!
His hand he now lays on that breast adored;
And now her pulse he feels; and now—(beware,
Beware, rash youth!) his lips draw in a hoard
Of perfume from her lips, which though they were
Still closed, yet oft the inarticulate sigh,
Issuing from thence, he drank with ecstasy.

Still were they cold; her hands were also cold;
Those hands he chafed and, perhaps to restore
To her chill, paly lips their warmth, so bold
He grew, he kiss'd those pale lips o'er and o'er.
Nay, to revive in their most perfect mould
Their wonted rubeous hue, he dared do more;—
He glued his mouth to them, and breathed his breath
To die with her, or rescue her from death.—

Thou art undone, mad youth! The fire of love
Burn'd so intensely in his throbbing veins,
That, had she been a statue, he might prove
A new Pygmalion, and the icy chains
Of death defy. Well then might he remove
The torpor which her o'er-wrought frame sustains.—
If *sweet*, revival from such menaced death;
More sweet, revival by a lover's breath!

She feels the delicate influence through her thrill,
And with seal'd eye lay in a giddy trance,
Scarce dare she open them, when had her will
On this been bent, she felt the power to glance
Their lights on him. No, with a lingering skill—
Oh, blame her not!—she did awhile enhance

The bliss of that revival, by a feign'd
Or half-feign'd show of conflict still sustain'd.

At last, she look'd!—*They* looked!—Eye met with eye!
The whole was told! The lover and the loved,
The adored, and the adorer, ecstasy
Never till then experienced—swiftly proved!-
Thanks for his aid were a *mean courtesy!*
They were forgotten! Transport unreproved,
This was his guerdon; this his rich reward!
An hour's oblivion with Sophronia shared!

Then all the world was lost to them, in one
Fulness of unimaginable bliss!—
Infinity was with them! and the zone
Unbound whence Venus sheds upon a kiss
Nectareous essences, and raptures known
Ne'er save to moments *unprepared* as this!
And in that earnest impulse did they find
Peace and intensity, alike combined!

To frame such joy, these things are requisite;
A lofty nature; the exalting stress
Of stimulating trials, which requite,
And antecedent sorrows doubly bless;
Consummate sympathies, which souls unite;
And a conjuncture, whence no longer press
Impulses—long as these delights we prove—
From one thing foreign to the world of love.

This could not last! Not merely would a word;—
A gesture would, a look, dissolve the charm!—
Could *home* be mention'd nor the thought restored,
To her remembrance of Gisippus' warm
And manly love? Bless'd be ye with your hour
Of transient bliss, and be ye safe from harm,
Ye fond, fond pair! But think not joys so high
Can be inwoven with reality!

At last a swift revulsion through her frame
And o'er her countenance stole: a sudden pause!
Her eyes which had imbibed a piercing flame,
Fell at once rayless; and her bosom draws
One in-pent sigh; one look imploring came
O'er her fine face! Titus knew well the cause
Of this so sudden change: he dared not speak;
He dared not move; dared not its reasons seek!

Some minutes they were silent. Night advanced;
Titus towards himself Sophronia press'd,
But dumb he stood; upwards she faintly glanced
A look upbraiding, and upon his breast—
Gently reclining—lay like one entranced!
No longer was happiness her guest.
She starts! She cries "Gisippus!" all is told!
Cold fell the word, on bosoms still more cold!

They rose and crept along in silentness—
Sophronia reach'd her home, but nothing said,
E'en to her mother, of her past distress.
Her threshold past not Titus—Thence he fled,
Soon as in safety he the maid did guess,
Like to a madman madden'd more with dread!
Nor ever of this night, or of its spell
Of mighty love, did he breathe a syllable!

We now take leave of Mr. Lloyd with peculiar gratitude for the rich materials for thought with which a perusal of his poems has endowed us. We shall look for his next appearance before the public with anxiety;—assured that his powers are not even yet fully developed to the world, and that he is destined to occupy a high station among the finest spirits of his age.

MR. OLDAKER ON MODERN IMPROVEMENTS.

[NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.]

MR. EDITOR:—I trust that even in this age of improvement you will suffer one of the oldest of the old school to occupy a small space in your pages. A few words respecting myself will, however, be necessary to apologize for my opinions. Once I was among the gayest and sprightliest of youthful aspirants for fame and fortune. Being a second son, I was bred to the bar, and pursued my studies with great vigour and eager hope, in the Middle Temple. I loved, too, one of the fairest of her sex, and was beloved in return. My toils were sweetened by the delightful hope that they would procure me an income sufficient for the creditable support of the mistress of my soul. Alas! at the very moment when the unlooked-for devise of a large estate from a distant relative gave me affluence, she for whom alone I desired wealth, sunk under the attack of a fever into the grave. Religion enabled me to bear her loss with firmness, but I determined, for her sake, ever to remain a bachelor. Although composed and tranquil, I felt myself unable to endure the forms, or to taste the pleasures of London. I retired to my estate in the country, where I have lived for almost forty years in the society of a maiden sister, happy if an old friend came for a few days to visit me, but chiefly delighting to cherish in silence the remembrance of my only love, and to anticipate the time when I shall be laid beside her. At last, a wish to settle an orphan nephew in my own profession, has compelled me to visit the scenes of my early days, and to mingle, for a short time, with the world. My resolution once taken, I felt a melancholy pleasure in the expectation of seeing the places with which I was once familiar, and which were ever linked in my mind with sweet and blighted hope. Every change has been to me as a shock. I have looked at large on society too, and there I see little in brilliant innovation to admire. Returned at last to my own fire-side, I sit down to throw together a few thoughts on the new and boasted Improvements, over which I mourn. If I should seem too querulous, let it be remembered, that my own happy days are long past, and that recollection is the sole earthly joy which is left me.

My old haunts have indeed suffered comparatively small mutation. The princely hall of the Middle Temple has the same venerable aspect as when, in my boyish days, I felt my heart beating with a strange feeling of mingled pride and reverence on becoming one of its members. The fountain yet plays among the old trees, which used to gladden my eye in spring for a few days with their tender green, to become so prematurely desolate. But the front of the Inner Temple hall, upon the terrace, is sadly altered for the worse. When I first knew it, the noble solidity of its appearance, especially of the figure over the gateway, cut massively in the stone, carried the mind back into the deep antiquity of the scene. Now the whole building is white-washed and plastered over, the majestic entrance supplied by an arch of pseudo-gothic, and a new library added, at vast cost, in the worst taste of the modern antique. The view from the garden is spoiled by that splendid nuisance, the Waterloo Bridge. Formerly we used to enjoy the enormous bend of the river, far fairer than the most marvellous work of art; and while our eyes dwelt on the placid mirror of water, our imagination went over it, through calm and majestic windings, into sweet rural scenes, and far inland bowers. Now the river appears only an oblong lake, and the feeling of the country once let into the town by that glorious avenue of crystal, is shut out by a noble piece of mere human workmanship! But nature never changes, and some of her humble works are ever found to renew old feelings within us, notwithstanding the sportive changes of mortal fancy. The short grass of the Temple garden is the same as when forty years ago I was accustomed to refresh my weary eyes with its greenness. There I have strolled again; and while I bent my head downwards and fixed my eyes on the thin blades and the soft daisies, I felt as I had felt when last I walked there—all between was as nothing, or a feverish dream—and I once more dreamed of the Seals, and of the living Sophia!—I felt—but I dare not trust myself on this subject farther.

The profession of the law is strangely altered since the days of my youth. It was then surely more liberal, as well as more rational, than I now find it. The business and pleasure of a lawyer were not entirely separated, as at present, when the first is mere toil, and the second lighter than vanity. The old stout-hearted pleaders threw a jovial life into their tremendous drudgeries, which almost rendered them delightful. Wine did but open to them the most curious intricacies of their art: they rose from it, like giants refreshed, to grapple with the sternest difficulties, and rejoiced in the encounter. Their powers caught a glow in the severity of the struggle, almost like that arising from strong exertion of the bodily frame. Nor did they disdain to enjoy the quaint jest, the far-fetched allusion, or the antique fancy, which sometimes craftily peeped out on them amidst their laborious researches. Poor T—— W—— was one of the last of the race. He was the heartiest and most romantic of special pleaders. Thrice happy was the attorney who could engage him to a steak or broiled fowl in the old coffee room in Fleet-street, were I have often met him. How would he then dilate, in the warmth of his heart, on all his professional triumphs—now chuckling over the fall of a brother into a trap set artfully for him in the fair guise of liberal pleading—now whispering a joy past joy in a stumble of the Lord Chief Justice himself, among the filmy cords drawn about his path! When the first bottle was despatched, arrived the time for his wary host to produce his papers in succession, to be drawn or settled by the joyous pleader. The well-lauded inspiration of a poet is not more genuine than that with which he then was gifted. All his nice discernment—all his vast memory—all his skill in drawing analogies and discerning principles in the "great obscurity" of the Year Books—were set in rapid and unerring action. On he went—covering page after page, his pen "in giddy mazes running," and his mind growing subtler and more acute with every glass. How dextrously did he then glide through all the strange windings of the case, with a sagacity which never failed, while he garnished his discourse with many a legal pun and learned conceit, which was as the light bubble on the deep stream of his knowledge! He is gone!—and I find none to resemble him in this generation—none who thus can put a spirit into their work, which may make cobweb-sophistries look golden, and change a laborious life into one long holiday!

In the greater world, I have observed, with sorrow, a prevailing disregard of the past, and a desire to extol the present, or to expatiate in visionary prospects of the future. I fear this may be traced not so much to philanthropy as to self-love, which inspires men with the wish personally to distinguish themselves as the teachers and benefactors of their species, instead of resting contented to share in the vast stock of recollections and sympathies which is common to all. They would fain persuade us that mankind, created "a little lower than the angels," is now for the first time "crowned with glory and honour;" and they exultingly point to institutions of yesterday for the means to regenerate the earth. Some, for example, pronounce the great mass of the people, through all ages, as scarcely elevated above the brutes which perish, because the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic, were not commonly diffused among them; and on the diffusion of these they ground their predictions of a golden age. And were there then no virtuous hardihood, no guileless innocence, no affections stronger than the grave, in that mighty lapse of years which we contemptuously stigmatize as dark? Are disinterested patriotism, conjugal love, open-handed hospitality, meek self-sacrifice, and chivalrous contempt of danger and of death, modern inventions? Has man's great birth-right been in abeyance even until now? Oh, no! The Chaldæan shepherd did not cast his quiet gaze through weeks and years in vain to the silent skies. He knew not, indeed, the discoveries of science, which have substituted an immense variety of figures on space and distance, for the sweet influences of the stars; yet did the heavens tell to him the glory of God, and angel faces smile on him from the golden clouds. Book-learning is, perhaps, the least part of the education of

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the species. Nature is the mightiest and the kindliest of teachers. The rocks and unchanging hills give to the heart the sense of a duration beyond that of the perishable body. The flowing stream images to the soul an everlasting continuity of tranquil existence. "The brave o'er-hanging firmament," even to the most rugged swain, imparts some consciousness of the universal brotherhood of those over whom it hangs. The affections ask no leave of the understanding to "glow and spread and kindle," to shoot through all the frame a tremulous joy, or animate to holiest constancy. We taste the dearest blessedness of earth in our childhood, before we have learned to express it in mortal language. Life has its universal lessons far beyond human lore. Kindness is as cheering, sorrow as purifying, and the aspect of death as softening to the ignorant in this world's wisdom, as to the scholar. The purest delights grow beneath our feet, and all who will stoop may gather them. While sages lose the idea of the Universal Parent in their subtleties, the lowly "FEEL after Him and find Him." Sentiment precedes reason in point of time, and is a surer guide to the noblest realities. Thus man hopes, loves, reveres, and enjoys, without the aid of writing or of the press to inspire or direct him. Many of his feelings are even heartier and more genuine before he has learned to describe them. He does not perpetually mistake words for things, nor cultivate his faculties and affections for a discerning public. His aspirations "are raised, not marked." If he is gifted with divine imagination, he may "walk in glory and in joy beside his plough upon the mountain side," without the chilling idea that he must make the most of his sensations to secure the applause of gay saloons or crowded theatres. The deepest impressions are worn out by the multiplication of their copies. Talking has almost usurped the place of acting and of feeling; and the world of authors seem as though their hearts were but paper scrolls, and ink, instead of blood, were flowing in their veins. "The great events with which old story rings, seem vain and hollow." If all these evils will not be extended by what is falsely termed the Education of the Poor, let us at least be on our guard lest we transform our peasantry from men into critics, teach them scorn instead of humble hope, and leave them nothing to love, to revere, or to enjoy!

The Bible Society, founded and supported, no doubt, from the noblest motives, also puts forth pretensions which are sickening. Its advocates frequently represent it as destined to change all earth into a paradise. That a complete triumph of the *principles* of the Bible would bring in the happy state which they look for can never be disputed; but the history of our religion affords no ground for anticipating such a result from the unaided perusal of its pages. Deep and extensive impressions of the truths of the gospel have never been made by mere reading, but always by the exertions of living enthusiasm in the holy cause. Providence may, indeed, in its inscrutable wisdom, impart new energy to particular instruments; but there appears no sufficient indication of such a change as shall make the *printed Bible alone* the means of regenerating the species. "An age of Bibles" may not be an age of Christian charity and hope. The word of God may not be revered the more by becoming a common book in every cottage, and a drug in the shop of every pawnbroker. It was surely neither known nor revered the less when it was a rare treasure, when it was proscribed by those who sat in high places, and its torn leaves and fragments were cherished even unto death. In those days, when a single copy chained to the desk of the church was alone in extensive parishes, did it diffuse less sweetness through rustic hearts than now, when the poor are almost compelled to possess it? How then did the villagers flock from distant farms, cheered in their long walks by thoughts not of this world, to converse for a short hour with patriarchs, saints, and apostles! How did they devour the venerable and well-worn page with tearful eyes, or listen delighted to the voice of one gifted above his fellows, who read aloud the oracles of celestial wisdom! What ideas of the Bible must they have enjoyed, who came many a joyful pilgrimage to hear or to read it! Yet even more precious was the enjoyment of those who, in times of persecution, snatched glances in secret at its pages, and thus entered, as by stealth, into the paradisiacal region, to gather immortal fruits and listen to angel voices. The word of God was dearer to them than house, land, or the "ruddy drops which warmed their hearts." Instead of the lamentable weariness and disgust with which the young now too often turn from the perusal of the Scriptures, they heard with mute attention and serious joy the histories of the Old Testament and the parables of the New. They heard with revering sympathy of Abraham receiving seraphs unawares—of Isaac walking out at eventide to meditate, and meeting the holy partner of his days—of Jacob's dream, and of that immortal Syrian Shepherdess, for whose love he served a hard master fourteen years, which seemed to him but a few days—of Joseph the beloved, the exile, the tempted, and the forgiver—of all the wonders of the Jewish story—and of the character and sufferings of the Messiah. These things were to them at once august realities, and surrounded with a dream-like glory from afar. "Heaven lay about them in their infancy." They preserved the purity—the spirit of meek submission—the patient confiding love of their childhood in their maturest years. They, in their turn, instilled the sweetness of Christian charity, drop by drop, into the hearts of their offspring, and left their example as a deathless legacy. Surely this was better than the dignified patronage now courted for the Scriptures, or the pompous eulogies pronounced on them by rival orators! The reports of anniversaries of the Bible Society are often, to me, inexpressibly nauseous. The word of God is praised in the style of eulogy employed on a common book by a friendly reviewer. It is evidently used as a theme to declaim on. But the praise of the Bible is almost overshadowed by the flatteries lavished on the nobleman or county member who has condescended to preside, and which it is the highest ambition of the speakers ingeniously to introduce and to vary. Happy is he who can give a new turn to the compliment, or invent a new alliteration or antithesis for the occasion! The copious nonsense of the successful orators is even more painful than the failures of the novices. After a string of false metaphors and poor conceits, applauded to the echo, the meeting are perhaps called on to sympathize with some unhappy debutant, whose sense of the virtues of the chairman proves too vast for his powers of expression; and with Miss Peachum in the Beggars' Opera, to lament "that so noble a youth should come to an untimely end." Alas! these exhibitions have little connection with a deep love of the Bible, or with real pity for the sufferings of man. Were religious tyranny to render the Scriptures scarce, and to forbid their circulation, they would speedily be better prized and honoured than when scattered with gorgeous profusion, and lauded by nobles and princes.

The Society for the Suppression of Mendicity is another boasted institution of these cold-hearted days. It would annihilate the race of beggars, and remove from the delicate eye the very form and aspect of misery. Strange infatuation! as if an old class of the great family of man might be cut off without harm! "All are but parts of one stupendous whole," bound together by ties of antique sympathy, of which the lowest and most despised are not without their uses. In striking from society a race whom we have, from childhood, been accustomed to observe, a vast body of old associations and gentle thoughts must necessarily be lost for ever. The poor mendicants whom we would banish from the earth, are the best sinecurists to whose sustenance we contribute. In the great science—the science of humanity—they not rarely are our first teachers: they affectingly remind us of our own state of mutual dependance; bring sorrow palpably before the eyes of the prosperous and the vain; and prevent the hearts of many from utterly "losing their nature." They give, at least, a salutary disturbance to gross selfishness, and hinder it from entirely forming an ossified crust about the soul. We see them too with gentle interest, because we have always seen them, and were accustomed to relieve them in the spring-time of our days. And if some of them are what the world calls imposters, and literally "do beguile us of our tears," and our alms, those tears are not shed, nor those alms given, in vain. If they have even their occasional revellings and hidden luxuries, we should rather rejoice to believe that happiness has everywhere its nooks and corners which we do not see; that there is more gladness in the earth than meets the politician's gaze; and that fortune has her favours, "secret, sweet, and precious," even for those on whom she seems most bitterly to frown. Well may that divinest of philosophers, Shakspeare, make Lear reply to his daughters, who had been speaking in the true spirit of modern improvements:

> "O reason not the need: our barest beggars
> Are in the poorest thing superfluous:
> Allow not nature more than nature needs,
> Man's life is cheap as beasts!"

There are many other painful instances in these times of that "restless wisdom" which "has a broom for ever in its hand to rid the world of nuisances." There are, for example, the plans of Mr. Owen, with his infallible recipes for the formation of character. Virtue is not to be forced in artificial hot-beds, as he proposes. Rather let it spring up where it will from the seed scattered throughout the earth, and rise hardly in sun and shower, while the "free mountain winds have leave to blow against it." But I feel that I have already broken too violently on my habits of dreamy thought, by the asperity into which I now and then have fallen. Let me then break off at once, with the single expression of a hope, that this "bright and breathing world" may not be changed into a Penitentiary by the efforts of modern reformers.

I am, Sir,
Your hearty well-wisher,
FRANCIS OLDAKER.

A CHAPTER ON "TIME."

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO THROW NEW LIGHT ON AN OLD SUBJECT.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

"We know what we are," said poor Ophelia, "but we know not what we may be." Perhaps she would have spoken with a nicer accuracy had she said, "we know what we *have been.*" Of our present state we can, strictly speaking, *know* nothing. The act of meditation on ourselves, however quick and subtle, must refer to the past, in which alone we can truly be said to live. Even in the moments of intensest enjoyment, our pleasures are multiplied by the quick-revolving images of thought; we feel the past and future in each fragment of the instant, even as the flavour of every drop of some delicious liquid is heightened and prolonged on the lips. It is the past only which we really enjoy as soon as we become sensible of duration. Each bygone instant of delight becomes rapidly present to us, and "bears a glass which shows us many more." This is the great privilege of a meditative being—never properly to have any sense of the present, but to feel the great realities as they pass away, casting their delicate shadows on the future.

Time, then, is only a notion—unfelt in its passage—a mere measure given by the mind to its own past emotions. Is there, then, any abstract common measure by which the infinite variety of intellectual acts can be meted—any real passage of years which is the same to all—any periodical revolution, in which all who have lived, have lived out equal hours? Is chronology any other than a fable, a "tale that is told?" Certain outward visible actions have passed, and certain seasons have rolled over them; but has the common idea of time, as applicable to these, any truth higher or surer than those infinite varieties of duration which have been felt by each single heart? Who shall truly count the measure of his own days—much more scan the real life of the millions around him?

The ordinary language of moralists respecting time shows that we really know nothing respecting it. They say that life is fleeting and short; why, humanly speaking, may they not as well affirm that it is extended and lasting? The words "short" and "long" have only meaning when used comparatively; and to what can we compare or liken this our human existence? The images of fragility—thin vapours, delicate flowers, and shadows cast from the most fleeting things—which we employ as emblems of its transitoriness, really serve to exhibit its durability as great in comparison with their own. If life is short, compared with the age of some fine animals, how much longer is it than that of many, some of whom pass through all the varieties of youth, maturity, and age, during a few hours, according to man's reckoning, and, if they are endowed with memory, look back on their early minutes through the long vista of a summer's day! An antediluvian shepherd might complain with as much apparent reason of the brevity of his nine hundred years, as we of our threescore and ten. He would find as little to confute or to establish his theory. There is nothing visible by which we can fairly reckon the measure of our lives. It is not just to compare them with the duration of rocks and hills, which have withstood "a thousand storms, a thousand thunders;" because where there is no consciousness, there is really no time. The power of imagination supplies to us the place of ages. We have thoughts which "date beyond the pyramids." Antiquity spreads around us her mighty wings. We live centuries in contemplation, and have all the sentiment of six thousand years in our memories:—

> "The wars *we* too remember of King Nine,
> And old Assaracus and Ibycus divine."

Whence, then, the prevalent feeling of the brevity of our life? Not, assuredly, from its comparison with any thing which is presented to our senses. It is only because the mind is formed for eternity that it feels the shortness of its earthly sojourn. Seventy years, or seventy thousand, or seven, shared as the common lot of a species, would seem alike sufficient to those who had no sense within them of a being which should have no end. When this sense has been weakened, as it was amidst all the exquisite forms of Grecian mythology, the brevity of life has been forgotten. There is scarcely an allusion to this general sentiment, so deep a spring of the pathetic, throughout all the Greek tragedies. It will be found also to prevail in individuals in proportion as they meditate on themselves, or as they nurse in solitude and silence the instinct of the Eternal.

The doctrine that Time exists only in remembrance, may serve to explain some apparent inconsistencies in the language which we use respecting our sense of its passage. We hear persons complaining of the slow passage of time, when they have spent a single night of unbroken wearisomeness, and wondering how speedily hours, filled with pleasure or engrossing occupations, have flown; and yet we all know how long any period seems which has been crowded with events or feelings leaving a strong impression behind them. In thinking on seasons of ennui we have nothing but a sense of length—we merely remember that we felt the tedium of existence; but there is really no space in the imagination filled up by the period. Mere time, unpeopled with diversified emotions or circumstances, is but one idea, and that idea is nothing more than the remembrance of a listless sensation. A night of dull pain and months of lingering weakness are, in the retrospect, nearly the same thing. When our hands or our hearts are busy, we know nothing of time—it does not exist for us; but as soon as we pause to meditate on that which is gone, we seem to have lived long because we look back through a long series of events, or feel them at once peering one above the other like ranges of distant hills. Actions or feelings, not hours, mark all the backward course of our being. Our sense of the nearness to us of any circumstance in our life is determined on the same principles—not by the revolution of the seasons, but by the relation which the event bears in importance to all that has happened to us since. To him who has thought, or done, or suffered much, the level days of his childhood seem at an immeasurable distance, far off as the age of chivalry, or as the line of Sesostris. There are some recollections of such overpowering vastness, that their objects seem ever near; their size reduces all intermediate events to nothing; and they peer upon us like "a forked mountain, or blue promontory," which, being far off, is yet nigh. How different from these appears some inconsiderable occurrence of more recent date, which a flash of thought redeems for a moment from long oblivion;—which is seen amidst the dim confusion of half-forgotten things, like a little rock lighted up by a chance gleam of sunshine afar in the mighty waters!

What immense difference is there, then, in the real duration of men's lives! He lives longest of all who looks back oftenest, whose life is most populous of thought or action, and on every retrospect makes the vastest picture. The man who does not meditate has no real consciousness of being. Such a one goes to death as to a drunken sleep; he parts with existence wantonly, because he knows nothing of its value. Mere men of pleasure are, therefore the most careless of duelists, the gayest of soldiers. To know the true value of being, yet to lay it down for a great cause, is a pitch of heroism which has rarely been attained by man. That mastery of the fear of death which is so common among men of spirit, is nothing but a conquest over the apprehension of dying. It is a mere victory of nerve and muscle. Those whose days have no principle of continuity—who never feel time but in the shape of ennui—may quit the world for sport or for honour. But he who truly lives, who feels the past and future in the instant, whose days are to him a possession of majestic remembrances and golden hopes, ought not to fancy himself bound by such an example. He may be inspired to lay down his life, when truth or virtue shall demand so great a sacrifice; but he will be influenced by mere weakness of resolution, not by courage, if he suffer himself to be shamed, or laughed, or worried out of it!

Besides those who have no proper consciousness of being, there are others even pernaps more pitiable, who are constantly irritated by the knowledge that their life is cut up into melancholy fragments. This is the case of all the pretending and the vain; those who are ever attempting to seem what they are not, or to do what they cannot; who live in the lying breath of contemporary report, and bask out a sort of occasional holiday in the glimmers of public favour. They are always in a feverish struggle, yet they make no progress. There is no dramatic coherence, no unity of action, in the tragi-comedy of their lives. They have hits and brilliant passages perhaps, which may come on review before them in straggling succession; but nothing dignified or massive, tending to one end of good or evil. Such are self-fancied poets and panting essayists, who live on from volume to volume, or from magazine to magazine, who tremble with nervous delight at a favourable mention, are cast down by a sly alliteration or satirical play on their names, and die of an elaborate eulogy "in aromatic pain." They begin life once a quarter, or once a month, according to the will of their publishers. They dedicate nothing to posterity; but toil on for applause till praise sickens, and their "life's idle business" grows too heavy to be borne. They feel their best days passing away without even the effort to build up an enduring fame; and they write an elegy on their own weaknesses! They give their thoughts immaturely to the world, and thus spoil them for themselves for ever. Their own earliest, and deepest, and most sacred feelings become at last dull common-places, which they have talked of and written about till they are glad to escape from the theme. Their days are not "linked each to each by natural piety," but at best bound together in forgotten volumes. Better, far better than this, is the lot of those whose characters and pretensions have little "mark of likelihood;"—whose days are filled up by the exercises of honest industry, and who, on looking back, recognise their lives only by the turns of their fortune, or the events which have called forth their affections. Their first parting from home is indelibly impressed on their minds—their school-days seem to them like one sweet April of shower and sunshine—their apprenticeship is a long week of toil;—but then their first love is fresh to them as yesterday, and their marriage, the births of their children, and of their grand-children, are events which mark their course even to old age. They reach their infancy again in thought by an easy process, through a range of remembrances few and simple, but pure, and sometimes holy. Yet happier is the lot of those who have one great aim; who devote their undivided energy to a single pursuit; who have one idea of practical or visionary good, to which they are wedded. There is a harmony, a proportion, in their lives. The Alchemist of old, labouring with undiminished hope, cheering his solitude with dreams of boundless wealth, and yet working on, could not be said to live in vain. His life was continuous—one unbroken struggle—one ardent sigh. There is the same unity of interest in the life of a great verbal scholar, or of a true miser; the same singleness of purpose, which gives solidity to floating minutes, hours, and years.

The great Lawyer deserves an eminent rank among true livers. We do not mean a political adventurer, who breathes feverishly amidst the contests, the intrigues, and petty triumphs of party; nor a dabbler in criticism, poetry, or the drama; nor even a popular nisi-prius advocate, who passes through a succession of hasty toils and violent excitements to fortune and to oblivion. But we have respect to the real dull plodder—to him who has bidden an early "Farewell to his Muse," if he ever had one: who anticipates years of solitary study, and shrinks not back; who proceeds, step by step, through the mighty maze with a cheerful heart, and counts on his distant success with mathematical precision. His industry and self-denial are powers as true as fancy or eloquence, and he soon learns to take as hearty a pleasure in their exercise. His retrospect is vast and single—of doubt solved, stoutest books mastered, nicest webs disentangled, and all from one intelligible motive which grows old with him, and, though it "strengthened with his strength," will not diminish with his decline. It is better in the end to have had the pathway of life circumscribed and railed in by forms and narrow observances, than to have strayed at will about the vast field open to human enterprise, in the freest and most graceful wanderings; because in the latter case we cannot trace our road again, or call it over; while in the first, we see it distinctly to the end, and can linger in thought over all the spots where our feet have trodden. The "old names" bring back the "old instincts" to our hearts. Instead of faint sympathies with a multitude of things, a kind of small partnership with thousands in certain general dogmas and speculations, we have all our own past individual being as a solid and abiding possession.

A metaphysician who thinks earnestly and intensely for himself, may truly be said to live long. He has this great advantage over the most felicitous inventor of machinery, or the most acute of scientific inquirers, that all his discoveries have a personal interest; he has his existence for his living study; his own heart is the mighty problem on which he meditates, and the "exceeding great reward" of his victories. In a moment of happy thought he may attain conquests, "compared to which the laurels which a Cæsar reaps are weeds." Years of anxious thought are rewarded by the attainment of one triumphant certainty, which immediately gives a key to the solution of a thousand pregnant doubts and mysteries, and enables him almost to "curdle a long life into an hour." When he has, after long pursued and baffled endeavours, rolled aside some huge difficulty which lay in his path, he will find beneath it a passage to the bright subtleties of his nature, through which he may range at will, and gather immortal fruits, like Aladdin in the subterranean gardens. He counts his life thus not only by the steps which he has taken, but by the vast prospects which, at every turn of his journey, have recompensed his toils, over which he has diffused his spirit as he went on his way rejoicing. We will conclude this article with the estimate made of life from his own experience by one of the most profound and original of thinkers.

"It is little, it is short, it is not worth having—if we take the last hour, and leave out all that has gone before, which has been one way of looking at the subject. Such calculators seem to say that life is nothing when it is over; and that may, in their sense, be true. If the old rule—*Respice finem*—were to be made absolute, and no one could be pronounced fortunate till the day of his death, there are few among us whose existence would, upon such conditions, be much to be envied. But this is not a fair view of the case. A man's life is his whole life, not to the last glimmering snuff of the candle; and this I say is considerable, and not *a little matter*, whether we regard its pleasures or its pains. To draw a peevish conclusion to the contrary, from our own superannuated desires of forgetful indifference, is about as reasonable as to say, a man never was young because he has grown old, or never lived because he is now dead. The length or agreeableness of a journey does not depend on the few last steps of it, nor is the size of a building to be judged of from the last stone that is added to it. It is neither the first nor the last hour of our existence, but the space that parts these two—not our exit, nor our entrance upon the stage, but what we do feel, and think while there—that we are to attend to in pronouncing sentence upon it. Indeed, it would be easy to show that it is the very extent of human life, the infinite number of things contained in it, its contradictory and fluctuating interests, the transition from one situation to another, the hours, months, years, spent in one fond pursuit after another; that it is, in a word, the length of our common journey, and the quantity of events crowded into it, that, baffling the grasp of our actual perception, make it slide from our memory, and dwindle into nothing in its own perspective. It is too mighty for us, and we say it is nothing! It is a speck in our fancy, and yet what canvas would be big enough to hold its striking groups, its endless objects! It is light as vanity; and yet if all its weary moments, if all its head and heartaches were compressed into one, what fortitude would not be overwhelmed with the blow! What a huge heap, a 'huge dumb heap,' of wishes, thoughts, feelings, anxious cares, soothing hopes, loves, joys, friendships, it is composed of! How many ideas and trains of sentiment, long, deep, and intense, often pass through the mind in one day's thinking or reading for instance! How many such days are there in a year, how many years in a long life, still occupied with something interesting—still recalling some old impression—still recurring to some difficult question, and making progress in it, every step accompanied with a sense of power, and every moment conscious of 'the high endeavour or the glad success;' for the mind seizes only on that which keeps it employed, and is wound up to a certain pitch of pleasurable excitement by the necessity of its own nature."—*Hazlitt's Table Talk*, Essay 6.

ON THE PROFESSION OF THE BAR.

[London Magazine.]

There is no pursuit in life which appears more captivating at a distance than the profession of the bar, as it is followed and rewarded in English courts of justice. It is the great avenue to political influence and reputation; its honours are among the most splendid which can be attained in a free state; and its emoluments and privileges are exhibited as prizes, to be contested freely by all its members. Its annals celebrate many individuals who have risen from the lowest ranks of the people, by fortunate coincidence, or by patient labour, to wealth and station, and have become the founders of honourable families. If the young aspirant perceives, even in his hasty and sanguine glance, that something depends on fortuitous circumstances, the conviction only renders the pursuit more inviting, by adding the fascinations of a game of chance to those of a trial of skill. If he is forced to confess that a sacrifice of principle is occasionally required of the candidate for its most lucrative situations, he glories in the pride of untempted virtue, and pictures himself generously resisting the bribe which would give him riches and authority in exchange for conscious rectitude and the approbation of the good and wise. While he sees nothing in the distance, but glorious success or more glorious self-denial, he feels braced for the severest exertion; nerved for the fiercest struggle; and regards every throb of an impatient ambition as a presage of victory.

Not only do the high offices of the profession wear an inviting aspect, but its level course has much to charm the inexperienced observer. It affords perpetual excitement; keeps the faculties in unceasing play; and constantly applies research, ingenuity, and eloquence, to the actual business of life. A Court of Nisi Prius is a sort of epitome of human concerns, in which advocates are the representatives of the hopes and fears, the prejudices, the affections, and the hatreds of others, which stir their blood, yet do not endanger their fortune or their peace. The most important interests are committed to their discretion, and the most susceptible feelings to their forbearance. They enjoy a fearful latitude of sarcasm and invective, with an audience ready to admire their sallies, and reporters eager to circulate them through the land. Their professional dress, which might else be ludicrous, becomes formidable as the symbol of power; for, with it, they assume the privilege of denouncing their adversaries, confounding witnesses, and withstanding the judge. If the matter on which they expatiate is not often of a dignified nature or productive of large consequences, it is always of real importance; not a mere theme for display, or a parliamentary shadow. The men whom they address are usually open to receive impressions, either from declamation or reasoning, unlike other audiences who are guarded by system, by party, or by interest, against the access of conviction. They are not confined to rigid logic, or to scholastic sophistry, but may appeal to every prejudice, habit, and feeling, which can aid their cause or adorn their harangue; and possess a large store of popular topics always ready for use. They do not contend for distant objects, nor vainly seek to awaken an interest for futurity, but struggle for palpable results which immediately follow their exertions. They play an animating game for verdicts with the resources of others, in which success is full of pleasure, and defeat is rarely attended with personal disgrace or injury. This is their ordinary vocation; but they have, or seem to have, a chance of putting forth all the energies of their mind on some high issue; and of vindicating their moral courage, perchance by rescuing an innocent man from dishonour and the grave, or by standing, in a tumultuous season, between the frenzy of the people and the encroachments of their enemies, and protecting the constitutional rights of their fellows with the sacred weapons of the laws. What dream is more inspiring to a youth of sanguine temperament than that of conducting the defence of a man prosecuted by the whole force of the state? He runs over in thought the hurried and feverish labour of preparation: the agitations of the heart quelled by the very magnitude of the endeavour and the peril; and imagines himself settled and bent up to his own part in the day of trial—the low tremulous beginning, the gradually strengthening assurance; the dawning recognition of sympathy excited in the men on whose lips the issue hangs; till the whole world of thought and feeling seems to open full of irresistible argument and happy illustrations; till his reasonings become steeped in passion; and he feels his cause and his triumph secure. To every enthusiastic boy, flattered by the prophecies of friends, such an event appears possible; and, in the contemplation, wealth, honour, and long life, seem things of little value.

But the state of anticipation cannot last for ever. The day arrives, when the candidate for forensic opportunities and honours must assume the gown amidst the congratulations of his friends, and attempt to realize their wishes. The hour is, no doubt, happy, in spite of some intruding thoughts; its festivities are not less joyous, because they wear a colouring of solemnity; it is one more season of hope snatched from fate, inviting the mind to bright remembrance, and rich in the honest assurances of affections and sympathy. It passes, however, as rapidly as its predecessors, and the morrow sees the youth at Westminster, pressing a wig upon aching temples, and taking a fearful survey of the awful bench where the judges sit, and the more awful benches crowded with competitors who have set out with as good hopes, who have been encouraged by as enthusiastic friends, and who have as valid claims to success as he. Now then, having allowed him to enjoy the foretastes of prosperity, let us investigate what are the probabilities that he will realize them. Are they, in any degree, proportioned to his intellectual powers and accomplishments? Is the possession of some share of the highest faculties of the mind, which has given him confidence, really in his favour? These questions we will try to solve. We may, perhaps, explain to the misjudging friends of some promising aspirant, who has not attained the eminence they expected, why their prophecies have been unfulfilled. They think that, with such powers as they know him to possess, there must be some fault which they did not perceive; some want of industry, or perseverance; but there was probably none; and they may rather seek for the cause of failure in the delicacy of feeling which won their sympathy, or in the genius which they were accustomed to admire.

Men who take a cursory view of the profession are liable to forget how peculiarly it is situated in relation to those who distribute its business. These are not the people at large; not even the factitious assemblage called the public; not scholars, nor readers, nor thinkers, nor admiring audiences, nor sages of the law, but simply *attorneys*. In this class of men are, of course, comprised infinite varieties of knowledge and of worth; many men of sound learning and honourable character; many who are tolerably honest and decorously dull; some who are acute and knavish; and more who are knavish without being acute. Respectable as is the station of attorneys, they are, as a body, greatly inferior to the bar in education and endowments; and yet on their opinion, without appeal, the fate of the members of the profession depends. It can scarcely be matter of surprise that they do not always perceive, as by intuition, the accurate thinking, the delicate satire, the playful fancy, or the lucid eloquence, which have charmed a domestic circle, and obtained the applause of a college, even if these were exactly the qualities adapted to their purposes. They will never, indeed, continue to retain men who are obviously unequal to their duty; but they have a large portion of business to scatter, which numbers, greatly differing in real power, can do equally well; and some junior business, which hardly requires any talent at all. In some cases, therefore, they are virtually not only judges but patrons, who, by employing young men early, give them not merely fees, but courage, practice, and the means of becoming known to others. From this extraordinary position arises the necessity of the strictest etiquette in form, and the nicest honour in conduct, which strangers are apt to ridicule, but which alone can prevent the bar from being prostrated at the feet of an inferior class. But for that barrier of rule and personal behaviour, solicitors would be enabled to assume the language and manner of dictators; and no barrister could retain at once prosperity and self-respect, except the few, whose reputations for peculiar skill are so well established, as to render it indispensable to obtain their services. It is no small proof of the spirit and intelligence of the profession, as a body, that these qualities are able to preserve them in a station of apparent superiority to those on whom they virtually depend. They frequent the places of business; they follow the judges from town to town, and appear ready to undertake any side of any cause; they sit to be looked at, and chosen, day after day, and year after year; and yet by force of professional honour and gentlemanly accomplishments, and by these alone, they continue to be respected by the men who are to decide their destiny. But no rule of etiquette, however strict, and no feelings of delicacy, however nice and generous, can prevent a man, who has connections among attorneys, from possessing a great advantage over his equals who have none. It is natural that his friends should think highly of him, and desire to assist him, and it would be absurd to expect that he should disappoint them by refusing their briefs, when conscious of ability to do them justice. Hence a youth, born and educated in the middle ranks of life, who is able to struggle to the bar, has often a far better chance of speedy success than a gentleman of rank and family. This consideration may lesson the wonder, so often expressed, at the number of men who have risen to eminence in the law from comparatively humble stations. Without industry and talent, they could have done little; but, perhaps, with both these they might have done less, if their early fame had not been nurtured by those to whom their success was a favourite object, and whose zeal afforded them at once opportunity and stimulus which to more elevated adventurers are wanting.

Let us now examine a little the *kind of talent* by which success at the bar will most probably be obtained; as, from want of attention to this point much disappointment frequently springs. We will first refer to the lower order of business—that by which a young man usually becomes known—and then take a glance at the Court of Nisi Prius, as it affords scope to the powers of leaders. We pass over at present that class of men who begin to practice as special pleaders, and after acquiring reputation, are called late in life with a number of clients who have learned to value them as they deserve. These have chosen a safe and honourable course; but the general reader would find little to excite his interest in a view of their silent and laborious progress. We speak rather of the business of Criminal Courts and of Sessions, in which young men generally make first trial of their powers, and of the more trivial and showy order of causes which it may sometimes be their good or ill fortune to lead.

In this description of business, it must be obvious to every one that there is no scope for the higher powers and more elegant accomplishments of the mind. But it is not so obvious, though not less true, that these are often encumbrances in the way of the advocate. This will appear, if we glance at the kind of work he has to perform, the jury whom he is to influence, or the audience by whom he is surrounded. Even if the successful performance of his duty, without regard to appearances, be his only aim, he will often find it necessary to do something more painful than merely to lay aside his most refined tastes. To succeed with the jury, he must rectify his understanding to the level of theirs; to succeed with the audience, he must necessarily go still lower; because, although there are great common themes on which an advocate may raise almost any assembly to his own level, and there are occasions in which he may touch on universal sympathies, these rarely, if ever, arise in the beginning of his professional life. On those whom he has to impress, the fine allusion, the happy conceit, the graceful sophistry, which will naturally occur to his mind, would be worse than lost. But though he may abstain from these, how is he to find, on the inspiration of the instant, the matter which ought to supply their place? Can he, accustomed to enjoy the most felicitous turns of expression, the airiest wit, the keenest satire, think in a moment of a joke sufficiently broad and stale to set the jury box and the galleries in a roar? Has he an instinctive sense of what they will admire? If not, he is wrong to wonder that he makes less impression than others, who may be better able to sacrifice the refinements which he prizes, and ought not to grudge them the success which fairly and naturally follows their exertions.

The chief duties of a junior are to examine witnesses; to raise legal objections; and, in smaller cases, to address juries. We will show in each of these instances how much a man of accurate perceptions and fastidious tastes must overcome before he can hope for prosperity.

The examination of witnesses, *in chief*, generally requires little more than a clear voice, a tolerable degree of self-possession, a superficial knowledge of the law of evidence, and an acquaintance with the matter to which the witnesses are expected to speak. There are critical cases, it is true, in which it is one of the most important duties which an advocate can perform, and requires all the dexterity and address of which he is master. But the more popular work, and that which most dazzles bystanders, is *cross-examination*, to which some men attribute the talismanic property of bringing falsehood out of truth. In most cases, before an intelligent jury it is mere show. When it is not founded on materials of contradiction, or directed to obtain some information which the witness will probably give, it proceeds on the assumption that the party interrogated has sworn an untruth, which he may be induced to vary. But, in the great majority of cases, the contrary is the fact, and therefore the usual consequence of speculative cross-examining is the production of a more minute and distinct story than was originally told. Still a jury may be puzzled; an effect may be produced; and as, in cases of felony, an advocate is not permitted to make a speech, he must either cross-examine or do nothing.* Here then, taste, feeling, and judgment, are sometimes no trifling hindrances. A man who has a vivid perception of the true relation of things cannot, without difficulty, force himself to occupy the attention of the court for an hour with questions which he feels have no bearing on the matter substantially in issue. Even when he might confound the transaction, the clearness of his own head will scarcely permit him to do the business well. He finds it hard to apply his mind to the elaborate scrutiny of a labourer's dinner or dress, the soundness of his sleep or the slowness of his cottage time-piece; and he hesitates to place himself exactly on a level with the witness who comes to detail them. His discretion may sometimes restrain him from imitating the popular cross-examiners of the day, but his incapacity will prevent him still oftener, until, like them, he has become thoroughly habituated to the intellectual atmosphere of the court in which he practises.

In starting and arguing points of law, a deep knowledge of law, and a faculty of clear and cogent reasoning, might seem qualities of the highest value. At Nisi Prius, before a Judge, they are so, or rather would be if the modern course of transacting business left a junior any opportunity to use them. But they are very far from producing unmingled advantage before inferior tribunals. As the bench is not often filled with magistrates profoundly learned, futile objections are almost as likely to succeed as good ones, and sometimes more so, because those to whom they are addressed have a vague notion of law as something full of mere arbitrary quiddities, and therefore likely to be found in direct opposition to common sense. Now, a man who is himself ignorant of a science is obviously better fitted to hit the fancies of the respectable gentlemen who entertain such a notion, than one who thoroughly understands its rules. The first will raise objections where the last would be silent; or will defend them with the warmth of honest conviction, where the lawyer would introduce them with hesitation and abandon them without a struggle. When a man has nothing really to say, he is assisted greatly by confusion of language, and a total want of arrangement and grammar. Mere stupidity, accompanied by a certain degree of fluency, is no inconsiderable power. It enables its possessor to protract the contest long after he is beaten, because he neither understands his own case, nor the arguments by which he has been answered. It is a weapon of defence, behind which he obtains protection, not only from his adversaries, but from the judge. If the learned person who presides, wearied out with endless irrelevancies, should attempt to stop him, he will insist on his privilege to be dull, and obtain the admiration of the audience by his firmness in supporting the rights of the bar. In these points, a sensitive and acute advocate has no chance of rivalling him in the estimation of the by-standers. A young man may, indeed, display correctness of thought, depth of research, and elegant perspicuity in an argument on a special case, in the Court of King's Bench; but few will hear and fewer listen to him; and he will see the proceedings of the day shortly characterized in the newspaper of the morrow as "totally destitute of public interest," while the opposite column will be filled with an elaborate report of a case of assault at Clerkenwell, or a picturesque account of a squabble between a pawnbroker and an alderman!

To address a jury, even in cases of minor importance, seems at first to require talents and requirements of a superior kind. It really requires a certain degree of nerve, a readiness of utterance, and a sufficient acquaintance with the ordinary line of illustration used and approved on similar occasions. A power of stating facts, indeed, distinctly and concisely is often important to the real issue of the cause; but it is not one which the audience are likely to appreciate. The man who would please them best should omit all the facts of his case, and luxuriate in the commonplaces which he can connect with it, unless he is able to embellish his statement, and invest the circumstances he relates with adventitious importance and dignity. An advocate of accurate perceptions, accustomed to rate things according to their true value, will find great difficulty in doing either. Most of the subject matter of flourish, which is quite as real to the superficial orator as any thing in the world, is thrown far back from his habitual thoughts, and hardly retains a place among the lumber of his memory. Grant him time for preparation, and a disposition to do violence to his own tastes, in order to acquire popularity, and he may approach a genuine artist in the factitious; but, after all, he will run great risk of being detected as a pretender. A single touch of real feeling, a single piece of concise logical reasoning, will ruin the effect of the whole, and disturb the well-attuned minds of an enlightened jury. Even the *topics* which must be dilated on are often such as would not weigh a feather with an intelligent man, *out of court*, and still oftener give occasion to watery amplifications of ideas, which may be fairly and fully expressed in a few words. It is obvious, therefore, that the more an advocate's mind is furnished with topics rather than with opinions or thoughts, the more easy will he find the task of addressing a jury. A sense of truth is ever in his way. It breaks the fine, flimsy, gossamer tissue of his eloquence, which, but for this sturdy obstacle, might hang suspended on slender props to glitter in the view of fascinated juries. If he has been accustomed to recognise a proportion between words and things, he will, with difficulty, screw himself up to describe a petty affray in the style of Gibbon, though to his client the battle of Holywell-lane may seem more important than the fall of the Roman Empire. If he would enrapture the audience when intrusted to open a criminal case of importance, he should begin with the first murder; pass a well-rounded eulogy on the social system; quote Blackstone, and the Precepts of Noah; and dilate on crime, conscience, and the trial by jury; before he begins to state the particular facts which he expects to prove. He disdains to do this—or the favourite topics never occur to his mind even to be rejected; and, instead of winning the admiration of a county, he only obtains a conviction! In addition to an inward repugnance to solemn fooling, men of sterling sense have also to overcome the dread of the criticism of others whose opinion they value, before they can descend to the blandishments of popular eloquence. It is seldom, therefore, that a young barrister can employ the most efficacious mode of delighting his audience, unless he is nearly on a par with them, and thinks, in honest stupidity, that he is pouring forth pathos and wisdom. There is, indeed, an excessive proneness to adopt the tone of the moment, an easiness of temperament, which sometimes may enable him to make a display in a trifling matter without conscious degradation; but he is ashamed of his own success when he grows cool, and was reduced by excessive sympathy to the level of his hearers only for the hour. Let no one, therefore, hastily conclude that the failure of a youth, to whom early opportunities are given, is a proof of essential inferiority to successful rivals. It may be, indeed, that he is below his business; for want of words does not necessarily imply plenitude of ideas, nor is abstinence from lofty prosings and stale jests conclusive evidence of wit and knowledge; but he is more probably superior to his vocation—too clear in his own perceptions to perplex others; too much accustomed to think to make a show without thought; and too deeply impressed with admiration of the venerable and the affecting readily to apply their attributes to the miserable facts he is retained to embellish.

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* This has been happily altered since the publication of this copy.

Let us now take a glance at that higher sphere in which a barrister moves when he has overcome the difficulties of his profession, and has obtained a share of leading business in the superior courts. Here it must at once be conceded that considerable powers are necessary, and that the deficiencies which aided the aspiring junior will no longer prevail. The learning and authority of the judge, and the acuteness of established rivals, not only prevent the success of those experiments, which ignorance only can hazard, but generally stifle them in the birth. The number and variety of causes, and the business-like manner in which they are conducted, restrain the use of fine spun rhetoric to a few special occasions. A man who would keep any large portion of general practice must have industry and retentive memory; clearness of mind enough to state facts with distinctness, and to arrange them in lucid order; a knowledge of law sufficient for the discovery of any point in his own favour, and for the supply of a ready evasion of any suggested by his opponent; quickness and comprehension of intellect to see the whole case on both sides at one view; and complete self-possession and coolness, without which all other capacities will be useless. These are essentials for Nisi Prius practice; but does it give scope to no higher faculties? Is there nothing in human intellect which may be allowed to adorn, to lighten, and to inspire the dull mass of facts and reasonings? Was Erskine no more than a distinct narrator, a tolerable lawyer, and a powerful reasoner on opposing facts? Can no higher praise be given to Scarlett, who sways the Court of King's Bench like a monarch, and to Brougham,[*] whose eloquence sheds terror into the enemies of freedom throughout the world? We will answer these questions as well as we are able.

For the highest powers of the mind which can be developed in eloquence even a superior court rarely affords room. Some have ascribed their absence to a chilling spirit of criticism in the legal auditors; but it is really attributable to the want of fitness in the subjects, and in the occasions. The noble faculty of imagination may, indeed, sometimes be excited to produce sublime creations, in the fervour of a speech, as justly as in the rage or sorrow of a tragedy; but in both the passion must enkindle the imagination, not the imagination create the passion. The distinction of eloquence from other modes of prose composition is, that it is primarily inspired by passion, and that it is either solely addressed to the feelings, or sways the understanding through the medium of the affections. It is only true when it is proportioned to the subject out of which it arises, because otherwise the passion is but fantastical and belongs to the mock heroic. In its course, it may edge the most subtle reasonings, point the keenest satire, and excite the imagination to imbody truth in living images of grandeur and beauty; but its spring and instinct must be passion. Nor is this all; it must not only be proportioned to the feeling in its author's mind, but to the feeling and intellect of those to whom it is addressed. A man of ardent temperament may work himself into a state of excitation by contemplating things which are remote and visionary; he may learn to take an enthusiastic interest in the objects of his own solitary musings; but if he brings into court the passionate dreams of his study, he will invite scorn and make failure certain. Not only is there rarely a subject which can worthily enkindle such passion as may excite imagination, but still more rarely an audience who can justify it by receiving it into their hearts. On some few occasions, as of great political trials, a burning indignation can be felt and reflected; the thoughts which the jury themselves swell with may be imaged in shapes of fire; and the orator may, while clothing mighty principles in noble yet familiar shapes, by a felicitous compromise, bring grandeur and beauty half way to the audience, and raise the audience to a station where they can feel their influence. But he must take care that he does not deceive himself by his own emotions; and mistake the inspiration of the study for that of the court. He is safe only while he is impelled by the feeling of those whom he addresses, and while he keeps fully within their view. In ordinary causes, imagination would not only be out of place, but it cannot enter; because its own essence is truth, and because it never has part in genuine eloquence unless inspired by adequate emotion. The flowers of oratory which are withheld by fear of contempt, or regarded as mere ornaments if produced, are not those which grow out of the subject, and are streaked and coloured by the feeling of the time; but gaudy exotics, leisurely gathered and stuck in out of season, and destitute of root. These fantastical decorations do not prove the existence of fervour or of imagination, but the want of both; and it is well if they are kept back by the good sense of the speaker, or his reasonable fears. But while a man, endowed with high faculties, cautiously abstains from displaying them on inadequate occasions, he will find them too often an impediment and a burden. He is in danger of timidity from a consciousness of power yet unascertained even by himself, and from an apprehension lest he should profane his long-cherished thoughts by a needless exposure. He is liable to be posed by the recurrence of some delicate association which he feels will not be understood, and modestly hesitates on the verge of the profound. He is, therefore, less fitted for ordinary business than another who can survey his own mental resources at a glance, as a well-ordered armoury, and select, without hesitation, the weapon best adapted for the struggle.

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[*] Now Lord Brougham.

Pathos, much oftener than imagination, falls within the province of the advocate. But the art of exciting pity holds no elevated rank in the scale of intellectual power. As employed at the bar in actions for adultery, seduction, and breach of promise of marriage, ostensibly as a means of effecting a transfer of money from the purse of the culprit to that of the sufferer, it sinks yet lower than its natural place, and robs the sorrows on which it expatiates of all their dignity. The first of these actions is a disgrace to the English character; for the plaintiff, who asks for money, has sustained no pecuniary loss; and what money does *he* deserve who seeks it as a compensation for domestic comfort, at the price of exposing to the greedy public all the shameful particulars of his wife's crime and of his own disgrace? In the other cases, where the party has been injured, not only in feeling, but in property or property's value, it is right that redress should be given; and that redress, even when sought in the form of damages, may be demanded in a tone of eloquent reprobation of villany; but the moment the advocate recounts the miseries of his client, in order to show how much money ought to be awarded, his task is degrading and irksome. He speaks of modesty destroyed, of love turned to bitterness, of youth blasted in its prime, and of age brought down by sorrow to the grave; and he asks for *money!* He hawks the wrongs of the inmost spirit, "as beggars do their sores," and unveils the sacred agonies of the heart, that the jury may estimate the value of their palpitations! It is in vain that he urges the specious plea, that no money can compensate the sufferer, to sustain the inference that the jury must give the whole sum laid in the declaration; for the inference does not follow. Money will not compensate, not because it is insufficient in degree but in kind; and, therefore, the consequence is—not that great damages should be given, but that none should be claimed. When once money is connected with the idea of mental grief, by the advocate who represents the sufferer, all respect for both is gone. Subjects, therefore, of this kind are never susceptible in a court of law of the truest pathetic; and the topics to which they give occasion are somewhat musty.

If, however, the highest powers of the mind are rarely brought into action in a Court of Nisi Prius, its more ordinary faculties are required in full perfection, and readiness for use. To an uninitiated spectator, the course of a leader in considerable business seems little less than a miracle. He opens his brief with apparent unconcern; states complicated facts and dates with marvellous accuracy; conducts his cause with zeal and caution through all its dangers; replies on the instant, dexterously placing the adverse features of each side in the most favourable position for his client; and, having won or lost the verdict for which he has struggled, as if his fortune depended on the issue, dismisses it from his mind like one of the spectators. The next cause is called on; the jury are sworn; he unfolds another brief and another tale, and is instantly inspired with a new zeal, and possessed by a new set of feelings; and so he goes on till the court rises, finding time in the intervals of actual exertion to read the newspaper, and talk over all the scandal of the day! This is curious work; it obviously requires all the powers to which we have referred as essential, and the complete absorption of the mind in each successive case. Besides these, there are two qualities essential to splendid success —a pliable temperament, and that compound quality, or result of several qualities, called *tact*, in the management of a cause.

To the first of these we have already alluded, in its excessive degree, as supplying a young barrister with the capability of making a display on trivial occasions; but, when chastened by time, it is a most important means of success in the higher departments of the profession. An advocate should not only throw his mind into the cause, but his heart also. It is not enough that the ingenuity is engaged to elicit strength, or conceal weakness, unless the sympathies are fairly enlisted on the same side. To men of lofty habits of thinking, or of cold constitution, this is impossible, unless the case is of intrinsic magnitude, or the client has been wise enough to supply an artificial stimulus in the endorsement on the brief. Such men, therefore, are only excellent in peculiar cases, where their sluggish natures are quickened, and their pride gratified or disarmed by a high issue, or a splendid fee. Persons, on the other hand, who are prevented from saying "no," not by cowardice, but by sympathy; whose hearts open to all who happen to be their companions; whose prejudices vanish with a cordial grasp of the hand, or melt before a word of judicious flattery; who have a spare fund of warmth and kindness to bestow on whoever seeks it; and who, energetic in action, are wavering in opinion, and infirm of purpose—will be delighted advocates, if they happen also to possess industry and nerve. The statement in their brief is enough to convert them into partisans, ready to triumph in the cause, if it is good, and to cling to it, if it is hopeless, as to a friend in misfortune. By this instinct of sociality, they are enabled not only to throw life into its details, and energy into its struggles, but to create for themselves a personal interest with the jury, which they turn to the advantage of their clients. It has often been alleged that the practice of the law prepares men to abandon their principles in the hour of temptation; but it will often appear, on an attentive survey of their character, that the extent of their practice was the effect rather than the cause of their inconstancy. They are not unstable because they were successful barristers, but became successful barristers by virtue of the very qualities which render them unstable. They do not yield on a base calculation of honour or gain, but because they cannot resist a decisive compliment paid to their talents by the advisers of the crown. They are undone by the very trick of sympathy which has often moulded them to the purposes of their clients, and swayed juries to their pleasure.

But the great power of a Nisi Prius advocate consists of *tact* in the management of a cause. Of this a by-stander sees but little; if the art be consummate, nothing; and he is, with difficulty, made to comprehend its full value. He hears the cause tried fairly out; observes perhaps witnesses on both sides examined; and thinking the whole merits have been necessarily disclosed, he sees no room for peculiar skill, except in the choice of topics to address to the jury. But a trial is not a hearing of all the matters capable of discovery which are relevant to the issue, or which would assist an impartial mind in forming a just decision. It is an artificial mode of determination, bounded by narrow limits, governed by artificial rules, and allowing each party to present to the court as much or as little of his own case as he pleases. A leader, then, has often, on the instant, to select out of a variety of matters, precisely those which will make the best show, and be least exposed to observation and answer; to estimate the probable case which lies hid in his adversary's brief, and prepare his own to elude its force; to decide between the advantage of producing a witness and the danger of exposing him; or, if he represents the defendant, to apply evidence to a case new in many of its aspects, or take the grave responsibility of offering none. Besides the opportunity which the forms and mode of trial give to the exercise of skill, the laws of evidence afford still greater play for ingenuity, and ground for caution. Some of these are founded on principle; some on mere precedent; some caprice; some on a desire to swell the revenue; and all serve to perplex the game of Nisi Prius, and give advantages to its masters. The power which they exhibit among its intricacies is really admirable, and may almost be considered as a lower order of genius. Its efforts must be immediate; for the exigency presses, and the lawyer, like the woman, "who deliberates is lost." He cannot stop to recollect a precedent, or to estimate all the consequences of a single step; yet he decides boldly and justly. His *tact* is, in truth, the result of a great number of impressions, of which he is now unconscious, which gives him a kind of intuitive power to arrive at once at the right conclusion. Its effects do not make a show in the newspapers: but they are very eloquent in the sheriff's office, and in the rolls of the court.

Besides exerting these qualities, a leader may render his statements not only perspicuous but elegant; relieve the dulness of a cause by wit not too subtle; and sometimes enliven the court by a momentary play of fancy. To describe Mr. Erskine, when at the bar, is to ascertain the highest intellectual eminence to which a barrister, under the most favourable circumstances, may safely aspire. He had no imaginative power, no originality of thought, no great comprehension of intellect, to encumber his progress. Inimitable as pleadings, his corrected speeches supply nothing which, taken apart from its context and the occasion, is worthy of a place in the memory. Their most brilliant passages are but commonplaces exquisitely wrought, and curiously adapted to his design. Had his mind been pregnant with greater things, teeming with beautiful images, or endued with deep wisdom, he would have been less fitted to shed lustre on the ordinary feelings and transactions of life. If he had been able to answer Pitt without fainting, or to support Fox without sinking into insignificance, he would not have been the delight of special juries, and the glory of the Court of King's Bench. For that sphere, his powers, his acquisitions, and his temperament were exactly framed. He brought into it, indeed, accomplishments never displayed there before in equal perfection—glancing wit, rich humour, infinite grace of action, singular felicity of language, and a memory elegantly stored, yet not crowded with subjects of classical and fanciful illustration. Above his audience, he was not beyond their sight, and he possessed rare facilities of raising them to his own level. In this purpose he was aided by his connection with a noble family, by a musical voice, and by an eloquent eye, which enticed men to forgive, and even to admire his natural polish and refined allusions. But his moral qualities tended even more to win them. Who could resist a disposition overflowing with kindness, animal spirits as elastic as those of a school-boy, and a love of gayety and pleasure which shone out amidst the most anxious labours? His very weaknesses became instruments of fascination. His egotism, his vanity, his personal frailties, were all genial, and gave him an irresistible claim to sympathy. His warmest colours were drawn, not from the fancy, but the affections. If he touched on the romantic, it was on the little chapter of romance which belongs to the most hurried and feverish life. The unlettered clown, and the assiduous tradesman, understood him, when he revived some bright recollection of childhood, or brought back on the heart the enjoyments of old friendship, or touched the chord of domestic love and sorrow. He wielded with skill and power the weapons which precedent supplied, but he rarely sought for others. When he defended the rights of the subject, it was not by abstract disquisition, but by freshening up anew the venerable customs and immunities which he found sanctioned by courts and parliaments, and infusing into them new energy. He entrenched himself within the forms of pleading, even when he ventured to glance into literature and history. These forms he rendered dignified as a fence against oppression, and cast on them sometimes the playful hues of his fancy. His powers were not only adapted to his sphere, but directed by admirable discretion and taste. In small causes he was never betrayed into exaggeration,,but contrived to give an interest to their details, and to conduct them at once with dexterity and grace. His jests told for arguments; his digressions only threw the jury off their guard, that he might strike a decisive blow; his audacity was always wise. His firmness was no less under right direction than his weaknesses. He withstood the bench, and rendered the bar immortal service; not so much by the courage of the resistance, as by the happy selection of its time, and the exact propriety of its manner. He was, in short, the most consummate advocate of whom we have any trace; he left his profession higher than he found it; and yet, beyond its pale, he was only an incomparable companion, a lively pamphleteer, and a weak and superficial debater!

Mr. Scarlett, the present leader of the Court of King's Bench, has less brilliancy than his predecessor, but is not perhaps essentially inferior to him in the management of causes. He studiously disclaims imagination; he rarely addresses the passions; but he now and then gives indications which prove that he has disciplined a mind of considerable elegance and strength to Nisi Prius uses. In the fine *tact* of which we have already spoken—the intuitive power of common sense sharpened within a peculiar circle—he has no superior, and perhaps no equal. He never betrays anxiety in the crisis of a cause, but instantly decides among complicated difficulties, and is almost always right. He can bridge over a nonsuit with insignificant facts, and tread upon the gulf steadily but warily to its end. What Johnson said of Burke's manner of treating a subject is true of his management of a cause, "he winds himself into it like a great serpent." He does not take a single view of it, nor desert it when it begins to fail, but throws himself into all its windings, and struggles in it while it has life. There is a lucid arrangement, and sometimes a light vein of pleasantry and feeling in his opening speeches; but his greatest *visible* triumph is in his replies. These do not consist of a mere series of ingenious remarks on conflicting evidence; still less of a tiresome examination of the testimony of each witness singly; but are as finely arranged on the instant, and thrown into as noble and decisive masses, as if they had been prepared in the study. By a vigorous grasp of thought, he forms a plan and an outline, which he first distinctly marks, and then proceeds to fill up with masterly touches. When a case has been spread over half a day, and apparently shattered by the speech and witnesses of his adversary, he will gather it up, condense, concentrate, and render it conclusive. He imparts a weight and solidity to all that he touches. Vague suspicions become certainties, as he exhibits them; and circumstances light, valueless, and unconnected till then, are united together, and come down in wedges which drive conviction into the mind. Of this extraordinary power, his reply on the first trial of "The King *v.* Collins," where he gained the verdict against evidence and justice, was a wonderful specimen. If such a speech is not an effort of genius, it is so much more complete than many works which have a portion of that higher faculty, that we almost hesitate to place it below them. Mr. Scarlett, in the debate on the motion relative to the Chancellor's attack on Mr. Abercrombie, showed that he has felt it necessary to bend his mind considerably to the routine of his practice. He was then surprised into his own original nature; and forgetting the measured compass of his long adopted voice and manner, spoke out in a broad northern dialect, and told daring truths which astonished the house. It is not thus, however, that he wins verdicts and compels the court to grant "rules to show cause!"

Mr. Brougham may, at first, appear to form an exception to the doctrines we have endeavoured to establish; but, on attentive consideration, will be found their most striking example. True it is, that this extraordinary man, who, without high birth, splendid fortune, or aristocratic connection, has, by mere intellectual power, become the parliamentary leader of the whigs of England, is at last beginning to succeed in the profession he has condescended to follow. But, stupendous as his abilities, and various as his acquisitions are, he does not possess that one presiding faculty —imagination, which, as it concentrates all others, chiefly renders them unavailing for inferior uses. Mr. Brougham's powers are not thus united and rendered unwieldy and prodigious, but remain apart, and neither assist nor impede each other. The same speech, indeed, may give scope to several talents; to lucid narration, to brilliant wit, to irresistible reasoning, and even to heart-touching pathos; but these will be found in parcels, not blended and interfused in one superhuman burst of passionate eloquence. The single power in which he excels all others is sarcasm, and his deepest inspiration—Scorn. Hence he can awaken terror and shame far better than he can melt, agitate, and raise. Animated by this blasting spirit, he can "bare the mean hearts" which "lurk beneath" a hundred "stars," and smite a majority of lordly persecutors into the dust! His power is all directed to the practical and earthy. It is rather that of a giant than a magician; of Briareus than of Prospero. He can do a hundred things well, and almost at once; but he cannot do the one highest thing; he cannot by a single touch reveal the hidden treasures of the soul, and astonish the world with truth and beauty unknown till disclosed at his bidding. Over his vast domain he ranges with amazing activity, and is a different man in each province which he occupies. He is not one, but Legion. At three in the morning he will make a reply in parliament, which shall blanch the cheeks and appal the hearts of his enemies; and at half-past nine he will be found in his place in court, working out a case in which a bill of five pounds is disputed, with all the plodding care of the most laborious junior. This multiplicity of avocation, and division of talent, suit the temper of his constitution and mind. Not only does he accomplish a greater variety of purposes than any other man—not only does he give anxious attention to every petty cause, while he is fighting a great political battle, and weighing the relative interests of nations—not only does he write an article for the Edinburgh Review while contesting a county, and prepare complicated arguments on Scotch appeals by way of rest from his generous endeavours to educate a people—but he does all this as if it were perfectly natural to him, in a manner so unpretending and quiet, that a stranger would think him a merry gentleman, who had nothing to do but enjoy himself and fascinate others. The fire which burns in the tough fibres of his intellect does not quicken his pulse, or kindle his blood to more than a genial warmth. He, therefore, is one man in the senate, another in the study, another in a committee room, and another in a petty cause; and consequently is never above the work which he has to perform. His powers are all as distinct and as ready for use as those of the most accomplished of Old Bailey practitioners. His most remarkable faculty, taken singly, the power of sarcasm, can be understood, even by a Lancaster jury. And yet, though worthy to rank with statesmen before whom Erskine sunk into insignificance, and though following his profession with zeal and perseverence almost unequalled, he has hardly been able to conquer the impediment of that splendid reputation, which to any other man must have been fatal!

These great examples are sufficient for our purpose, and it would be invidious to add more. Without particularizing any, we may safely affirm that if the majority of successful advocates are not men of genius, they are men of very active and penetrating intellect, disciplined by the peculiar necessity of their profession to the strictest honour, and taught by their intimate and near acquaintance with all the casualties of human life, and the varieties of human nature, indulgence to frailty and generosity to misfortune. It is impossible to estimate too highly the value of such a body of men, aspiring, charitable, and acute; who, sprung from the people, naturally sympathise with their interests; who, being permitted to grasp at the honours of the state, are supplied with high motives to preserve its constitution; and who, if not very eager for improving the laws, at least keep unceasing watch over every attempt to infringe on the rights they sustain, or to pervert them to purposes of oppression. If they are too prone to change their party as they rise, they seldom do so from base or sordid motives, and often infuse a better spirit into those whose favours they consent to receive.

Let no one of those who, with a consciousness of fine talents, has failed in his profession, abate his self-esteem, or repine at his fortune. A life of success, though a life of excitement, is also a life of constant toil, in which the pleasures of contemplation and of society are sparingly felt, and which sometimes tends to a melancholy close. Besides, the best part of our days is past before the struggle begins. Success itself has nothing half so sweet as the anticipations of boyish ambition and the partial love by which they were fostered. A barrister can scarcely hope to begin a career of anxious prosperity till after thirty; and surely he who has attained that age, after a youth of robust study and manly pleasure, with firm friends, and an unspotted character, has no right to complain of the world!

THE WINE CELLAR.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

Facilis descensus Averni,
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hic labor, hoc opus est. Virg.

In the deep discovery of the subterranean world, a shallow part would satisfy some inquirers, who, if two or three yards were opened beneath the surface would not care to rake the bowels of Potosi and regions towards the centre. Sir Thomas Browne.

Men have always attached a peculiar interest to that region of the earth which extends for a few yards beneath its surface. Below this depth the imagination, delighting to busy itself among the secrets of Time and Mortality, hath rarely cared to penetrate. A few feet of ground may suffice for the repose of the first dwellers of the earth until its frame shall grow old and perish. The little coin, silent picture of forgotten battles, lies among the roots of shrubs and vegetables for centuries, till it is turned into light by some careful husbandman, who ploughs an inch deeper than his fathers. The dead bones which, loosened from their urns, gave occasion to Sir Thomas Browne's noblest essay, "had outlasted the living ones of Methusalem, and in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, outworn all the strong and spacious buildings above them, and quietly rested under the drums and tramplings of three conquests." Superstition chooses the subterranean space which borders on the abodes of the living, and ranges her vaults and mysterious caverns near to the scenes of revelry, passion, and joy; and within this narrow rind rest the mighty products of glorious vintages, the stores of that divine juice which, partaking of the rarest qualities of physical and intellectual nature, blends them in happier union within us. Here, in this hallowed ground, the germs of inspiration and the memorials of decay lie side by side, and Bacchus holds divided empire with the King of Terrors.

As I sat indulging this serious vein of reflection, some years ago, when my relish of philosophy and port was young, a friend called to remind me that we had agreed to dine together with rather more luxury than usual. I had made the appointment with boyish eagerness, and now started gladly from my solitary reveries to keep it. The friend with whom I had planned our holiday, was one of those few persons whom you may challenge to a convivial evening with a mathematical certainty of enjoying it;—which is the rarest quality of friendship. Many who are equal to great exigencies, and would go through fire and water to serve you, want the delicate art to allay the petty irritations, and heighten the ordinary enjoyments of life, and are quite unable to make themselves agreeable at a *tête-à-tête* dinner. Not so my companion; who, zealous, prompt, and consoling in all seasons of trial, had good sense for every little difficulty, and a happy humour for every social moment; at all times a better and wiser self. Blest with good but never boisterous spirits; endowed with the rare faculty not only of divining one's wishes, but instantly making them his own; skilful in sweetening good counsel with honest flattery; able to bear with enthusiasm in which he might not participate, and to avoid smiling at the follies he could not help discerning; ever ready to indulge the secret wish of his guest "for another bottle," with heart enough to drink it with him, and head enough to take care of him when it was gone, he was (and yet is) the pleasantest of advisers, the most genial of listeners, and the quietest of lively companions. On this memorable day he had, with his accustomed forethought, given particular orders for our entertainment, and I hastened to enjoy it with him, little thinking how deep and solemn was the pleasure which awaited us.

We arrived at the —— Coffee House about six on a bright afternoon in the middle of September, and found every thing ready and excellent; and the turtle magnificent and finely relieved by lime punch effectually iced; grilled salmon crisply prepared for its appropriate lemon and mustard; a leg of Welch mutton just tasted as a "sweet remembrancer" of its heathy and hungry hills; woodcocks with thighs of exquisite delicacy and essence "deeply interfused" in thick soft toast; and mushrooms, which Nero justly called "the flesh of the gods," simply broiled and faintly sprinkled with Cayenne.* Our conversation was, of course, confined to mutual invitations and expressive criticisms on the dishes; the only table-talk which men of sense can tolerate. But the most substantial gratifications, in this world at least, must have an end; and the last mushroom was at length eaten. Unfortunately for the repose of the evening, we were haunted by the recollection of some highly flavoured port, and, in spite of strong evidence of identity from conspiring waiters, sought for the like in vain. Bottle after bottle was produced and dismissed as "not the thing," till our generous host, somewhat between liberal hospitality and just impatience, smilingly begged us to accompany him into the cellar, inspect the whole of "his little stock," and choose for ourselves! We took him at his word; another friend of riper years and graver authority joined us; and we prepared to follow our guide, who stood ready to conduct us to the banks of Lethe. All the preparations, like those which preceded similar descents of the heroes of old, bespoke the awfulness and peril of the journey. Our host preceded us with his massive keys to perform an office collateral to that of St. Peter; behind, a dingy imp of the nether regions stood with glasses in his hands and a prophetic grin on his face; and each of us was armed with a flaming torch to penetrate the gloom which now stretched through the narrow entrance before us.

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* This trait sufficiently accounts for the flowers which were seen scattered on the sepulchre of Nero, when the popular indignation raged highest against his memory—the grateful Roman had eaten his mushroom under imperial auspices. Had Lord Byron been acquainted with the flavour of choice mushrooms, he would have turned to give it honour due after the following stanza, one of the noblest in that work, which, with all its faults of waywardness and haste, is a miracle of language, pathos, playfulness, sublimity, and sense.

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
The nations free, and the world overjoy'd,
Some hand unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb—
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
Of feeling for some kindness done when power
Had left the wretch one uncorrupted hour!

We descended the broken and winding staircase with cautious steps, and, to confess the truth, not without some apprehension for our upward journey, yet hoping to be numbered among that select class of Pluto's visiters, "quos ardens evexit ad æthera virtus." On a sudden, turning a segment of a mighty cask, we stood in the centre of the vast receptacle of spirituous riches. The roof of solid and stoutly compacted brickwork, low, but boldly arched, looked substantial enough to defy all attacks of the natural enemy, water, and resist a second deluge. From each side ran long galleries, partially shown by the red glare of the torches, extending one way far beneath the busy trampling of the greatest shopkeepers and stock-jobbers in the world; and, on the other, below the clamour of the Old Bailey Court and the cells of its victims. What a range! Here rest, cooling in the deep-delved cells, the concentrated essences of sunny years! In this archway huge casks of mighty wine are scattered in bounteous confusion, like the heaped jewels and gold on the "rich strond" of Spenser, the least of which would lay Sir Walter's Fleming low! Throughout that long succession of vaults, thousands of bottles, "in avenues disposed," lie silently waiting their time to kindle the imagination, to sharpen the wit, to open the soul, and to unchain the trembling tongue. There may you feel the true grandeur of quiescent power, and walk amidst the palpable elements of madness or of wisdom. What stores of sentiment in that butt of raciest Sherry! What a fund of pensive thought! What suggestions for delicious remembrance! What "aids to reflection!" (genuine as those of Coleridge) in that Hock of a century old. What sparkling fancies, whirling and foaming, from a stout body of thought in that full and ripe Champagne! What mild and serene philosophy in that Burgundy, ready to shed "its sunset glow" on society and nature! This pale Brandy, softened by age, is the true "spirit" which "disturbs us with the joy of elevated thoughts." That Hermitage, stealing gently into the chambers of the brain, shall make us "babble of green fields;" and that delicate Claret, innocently bubbling and dancing in the slender glass, shall bring its own vine-coloured hills more vividly before us even than Mr. Stanfield's pencil! There from a time-changed bottle, tenderly drawn from a crypt, protected by huge primeval cobwebs, you may taste antiquity, and feel the olden time on your palate! As we sip this marvellous Port,[*] to the very colour of which age has been gentle, methinks we have broken into one of those rich vaults in which Sir Thomas Browne, the chief butler of the tomb, finds treasures rarer than jewels. "Some," saith he, "discover sepulchral vessels containing liquors which time hath incrassated into jellies. For besides lacrymatories, notable lamps, with oils and aromatic liquors, attended noble ossuaries; and some yet retaining a vinosity and spirit in them, which, if any have tasted, they have far exceeded the palates of antiquity;—liquors, not to be computed by years of annual magistrates, but by great conjunctions and the fatal periods of kingdoms. The draughts of consulary date were but crude unto these, and opimian wine but in the must unto them."

We passed on from flavour to flavour with our proud and liberal guide, whose comments added zest even to the text which he had to dilate on. A scent, a note of music, a voice long unheard, the stirring of the summer breeze, may startle us with the sudden revival of long-forgotten feelings and thoughts, but none of these little whisperers to the heart is so potently endowed with this simple spell as the various flavours of Port to one who has tried, and, in various moods of his own mind, relished them all. This full, rough, yet fruity wine, brings back that first season of London life, when topics seemed exhaustless as words and coloured with rainbow hues; when Irish students, fresh from Trinity College, Dublin, were not too loud or familiar to be borne; when the florid fluency of others was only tiresome as it interrupted one's own; when the vast Temple Hall was not too large or too cold for sociality; and ambition, dilating in the venerable space, shaped dreams of enterprise, labour, and glory, till it required more wine to assuage its fervours. This taste of a liquor, firm yet in body, though tawny with years, bears with it to the heart that hour when, having returned to my birth-place, after a long and eventful absence, and having been cordially welcomed by my hearty friends, I slipped away from the table, and hurried, in the light of a brilliant sunset, to the gently declining fields and richly wooded hedgerows which were the favourite haunt of my serious boyhood. The swelling hills seemed touched with ethereal softness; the level plain was invested "with purpureal gleams;" every wild rose and stirring branch was eloquent with vivid recollections: a thousand hours of happy thought-fulness came back upon the heart; and the glorious clouds which fringed the western horizon looked prophetic of golden years "predestined to descend and bless mankind." This soft, highly-flavoured Port, in every drop of which you seem to taste an aromatic flower, revives that delicious evening, when, after days of search for the tale of Rosamond Grey, of which I had indistinctly heard, I returned from an obscure circulating library with my prize, and brought out a long-cherished bottle, given me two years before as a curiosity, by way of accompaniment to that quintessence of imaginative romance. How did I enjoy, with a strange delight, its scriptural pathos, like a newly discovered chapter of the Book of Ruth; hang enamoured over its young beauty, lovelier for the antique frame of language in which it was set; and long to be acquainted with the author, though I scarcely dared aspire so high, and little anticipated those hundreds of happy evenings since passed in his society, which now crowd on me in rich confusion!—Thus is it that these subtlest of remembrancers not only revive some joyful season, but this also "contains a glass which shows us many more," unlocking the choicest stores of memory, that cellar of the brain, in which lie the treasures which make life precious.

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[*] Old Port wine is more ancient to the imagination than any other, though in fact it may have been known fewer years; as a broken Gothic arch has more of the spirit of antiquity about it than a Grecian temple. Port reminds us of the obscure middle ages; but Hock, like the classical mythology, is always young.

But see! our party have seated themselves beneath that central arch to enjoy a calmer pleasure after the fatigues of their travel. They look romantic as banditti in a cave, and good-humoured as a committee of aldermen. A cask which has done good service in its day—the shell of the evaporated spirit—serves for a table, round which they sit on rude but ample benches. The torches planted in the ground cast a broad light over the scene, making the ruddy wine glisten, and seeming, by their irregular flickering, as if they too felt the influence of the spot. My friend, usually so gentle in his convivialities, has actually broken forth into a song, such as these vaults never heard; our respected senior sits trying to preserve his solemn look, but unconsciously smiling; and Mr. B——l, the founder of the banquet, is sedulously doing the honours with only intenser civility, and calling out for fresh store of ham, sandwiches, and broiled mushrooms, to enable us to do justice to the liquid delicacies before us. The usual order of wines is disregarded; no affected climax, no squeamish assortments of tastes for us here; we despise all rules, and yield a sentimental indulgence to the aberrations of the bottle. "Riches fineless" are piled around us; we are below the laws and their ministers; and just, lo! in the farthest glimmer of the torches lies outstretched our black Mercury, made happy by our leavings, and seeming to rejoice that in the cellar, as in the grave, all men are equal.

How the soul expands from this narrow cell and bids defiance to the massive walls! What Elysian scenes begin to dawn amidst the darkness! Now do I understand the glorious tale of Aladdin and the subterranean gardens. It is plain that the visionary boy had discovered just such a cellar as this, and there eagerly learned to gather amaranthine fruits, and range in celestial groves till the Genius of the Ring, who has sobered many a youth, took him in charge, and restored him to common air. Here is the true temple, the inner shrine of Bacchus. Feebly have they understood the attributes of the benignant god, who have represented him as delighting in a garish bower with clustering grapes; here he rejoices to sit, in his true citadel, amidst his mightier treasures. Methinks we could now, in prophetic mood, trace the gay histories of these imbodied inspirations among those who shall feel them hereafter; live at once along a thousand lines of sympathy and thought which they shall kindle; reverse the melancholy musing of Hamlet, and trace that which the bunghole-stopper confines to "the noble dust of an Alexander," which it shall quicken; and peeping into the studies of our brother contributors, see how that vintage which flushed the hills of France with purple, shall mantle afresh in the choice articles of this Magazine.

But it is time to stop, or my readers will suspect me of a more recent visit to the cellar. They will be mistaken. One such descent is enough for a life; and I stand too much in awe of the Powers of the Grave to venture again so near to their precincts.

ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BRUNSWICK THEATRE BY FIRE.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

We notice this lamentable accident in our dramatic record, not for the sake of inquiry into its causes, or of multiplying the dismal associations which it awakens, but for the striking manner in which it has brought out the proper virtues of players. Actors of all ranks; managers of all interests; the retired and the active; the successful and the obscure; the refined and the vulgar; from Mrs. Siddons down to the scene-shifters of Sadler's Wells, have pressed forward to afford their sympathy and relief to the living sufferers. The proprietors of the patent theatres, who were just complaining of the infringements on their purchased rights, which have rendered them almost valueless, at once forgot the meditated injury to themselves, and saw nothing but the misery of their comrades. It is only on occasions such as these that the charities which are nurtured amidst the excitements and vicissitudes of a theatrical life are exhibited, so as to put the indiscriminate condemnations of the crabbed moralist and the fanatic to shame. There is more equality in the distribution of goodness and evil than either of these classes imagine; for the "respectable" part of the community are powerful and permanent; and obtain, perhaps, something more than justice for the negative virtues. Far be it from us to undervalue these, or to sympathize with any who would represent the ordinary guards and fences of morality as things of little value; but justice is due to all; and justice, we cannot help thinking, is scarcely done to those whose irregularities and whose virtues grow together on that verge of ruin and despair on which they stand in the times of their giddiest elevation. A cold observance of the decencies of life excites no man's envy and wounds no man's self-love; and, therefore, it is allowed without grudging; while the dazzling errors and redeeming nobleness of the light-hearted and the generous are more easily abused than copied. To detect "the soul of goodness in things evil," is not to confound evil with good, or to weaken the laws of honour and conscience, but to give to them a finer precision and a more penetrating vigour. It is not by distinguishing, but by confounding, that pernicious sentimentalists pervert the understanding and corrupt the affections. They lend to vice the names and attributes of virtue; tack together qualities which could never be united in nature; and thus, in order to produce a new and startling effect, deprave the moral sensibility, and relax the tone of manly feeling. But it is another thing to hold the balance fairly between the excellencies and the frailties of imperfect men; to trace the hints and indications of high emotion amidst the weaknesses of our nature; to consider temptations as well as transgressions, and to estimate not only what is done but what is resisted. We can, indeed, do this but partially, yet we should, as far as possible, dispose ourselves to be just in our moral censures; and we shall find in those whom we call "good for nothing people," more good than we think for. Actors are, no doubt, more liable to deviate from the ordinary proprieties of conduct, than merchants or agriculturists; it is their business to give pleasure to others, and, therefore, they must incline to the pleasurable; they live in the present, and it is no wonder that, as their tenure is more precarious than that of others, they take less thought for the future. But if they have less of the virtue of discretion, they have also less of that alloy of gross selfishness to which it is allied; they have much of the compassion which they help to diffuse; and ludicrous as their vanities sometimes are, they give way at once on the touch of sympathy for unmerited or merited sorrow. Mr. Kean is an extreme instance, perhaps, both of imprudence and generosity; and accordingly no man living has been treated with greater injustice by a moral and discerning public. Raised in a moment from obscurity and want to be the idol of the town; courted, caressed, and applauded by the multitude, praised by men of genius, with rank, beauty, and wit, proud to be enlisted in his train, he grew giddy and fell, and was hooted from the stage with brutal indignities. All knew his faults; but how few were capable of understanding his virtues—his princely spirit, his warm and cordial friendship, his proneness to forget his own interests in those of others, his magnanimity and his kindness! The "respectable" part of the community do not engross all its goodness, although they turn it to the best account for their own benefit. Under the shield of this character, they sometimes do things which the vagabonds they sneer at would not, and could not achieve; and such is the submission of mankind to custom, that they retain their name even when they are detected. An attorney, in large practice, convicted of a fraud, retains the addition "respectable" till he receives judgment; the announcement of the failure of a country bank, by which hundreds are ruined, styles the swindlers "the respectable firm;" and a most respectable member of the religious world speculates in hops, or in stock, without reproach, and, when he has failed for thousands, fraudulently gambled away, continues to hold shilling whist in pious abomination. We have been led to this train of reflection by seeing in a newspaper the speech of a most respectable Home Missionary, named Smith, at the Mansion-house, in which he exults in the horrible catastrophe as "the triumph of piety in London!" and this person, no doubt, regards the accidental mention of the name of the Supreme Being on the stage as blasphemy. It is difficult to express one's indignation at such a spirit and such language without wounding the feelings of those whose opinions of the guilt of theatrical enjoyments have not rendered them insensible to the feelings of others.

It must be admitted that there is something in the sudden death of actors which shocks us peculiarly at the moment, because the contrast between life and death seems more violent in their case than in that of others. We connect them, by the law of association, with our own gayest moments, and fancy that they who live to please must lead a life of pleasure. Alas! the truth is often far otherwise. The comedian droops behind the scenes, quite chapfallen; the tragic hero retires from his stately griefs to brood over homely and familiar sorrows, which no poetry softens; the triumphant actress, arrayed in purple and in pall, may know the pangs of despised love, or anticipate the coming on of the time when she shall be prematurely old, and as certainly neglected. The stage is a grave business to those who study it even successfully, though its rewards are intoxicating enough to turn the most sober brain. The professors in misfortune—especially such a misfortune as this—have the most urgent claims on our sympathy. Should we allow those to be miserable who have so often made us and thousands happy? Should we shut our hearts against those who have touched them so truly; who have helped to lighten the weight of existence; and have made us feel our kindred with a world of sorrow and of tears? Their art has the most sacred right to the protection of humanity, for it touches it most nearly. It makes no appeal to posterity; it does not aim at the immortal, in contempt of our perishable aims and regards; but it is contented to live in our enjoyments, and to die with them. Its triumphs are not diffused by the press, nor recorded in marble, but registered on the red-leaved tablets of the heart, satisfied to date its fame with the personal existence of its witnesses. It forms a part of ourselves; beats in the quickest pulses of our youth, and supplies the choicest topics of our garrulous age. It partakes of our fragility, nay even dies before us, and leaves its monument in our memories. Surely, then, it becomes us "to see the players well bestowed," when their gayeties are suddenly and prematurely eclipsed, and their short flutterings of vanity stayed before their time; or to provide for those who depended on their exertions. Of all people, they do most for relations; they hence most depend on them; and, therefore, their case both deserves and requires our most active sympathy. The call has been, in this instance, powerfully made, and will, we hope, be answered practically by all who revere the genius, and love the profession, and partake the humanity of Shakspeare.

FIRST APPEARANCE OF MISS FANNY KEMBLE.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

When we predicted, last month, that if Covent Garden theatre should be opened at all, it would derive attraction even from the extreme depression into which it had sunk, we had no idea of the manner in which this hope would be realized. We little dreamed that the circumstances which had threatened to render this house desolate, would inspire female genius to spring from the family whose honours were interwoven with its destiny, like an infant Minerva, almost perfect at birth, to revive its fortunes and renew its glories. In the announcement that, on the opening night, Miss Fanny Kemble, known to be a young lady of high literary endowments, though educated without the slightest view to the stage as a profession, would present herself as Juliet—that her mother, who, in her retirement, had been followed by the grateful recollections of all lovers of the drama, would reappear, in the part of Lady Capulet, to introduce and support her; and that her father would imbody, for the first time, that delightful creation of Shakspeare's happiest mood, Mercutio—there was abundant interest to ensure a full, respectable, and excited audience; but no general expectation had gone forth of the splendid event which was to follow. Even in our youngest days, we never shared in so anxious a throb of expectation as that which awaited the several appearances of these personages on the stage. The interest was almost too complicated and intense to be borne with pleasure; and when Kemble bounded on the scene, gayly pointed at Romeo, as if he had cast all his cares and twenty of his years behind him, there was a grateful relief from the first suspense, that expressed itself in the heartiest enthusiasm we ever witnessed. Similar testimonies of feeling greeted the entrance of Mrs. Kemble; but our hearts did not breathe freely till the fair debutant herself had entered, pale, trembling but resolved, and had found encouragement and shelter in her mother's arms. But another and a happier source of interest was soon opened; for the first act did not close till all fears for Miss Kemble's success had been dispelled; the looks of every spectator conveyed that he was electrified by the influence of new-tried genius, and was collecting emotions, in silence, as he watched its development, to swell its triumph with fresh acclamations. Fo' our own part, the illusion that she was Shakspeare's own Juliet came so speedily upon us, as to suspend the power of specific criticism—so delicious was the fascination, that we disliked even the remarks of by-standers that disturbed that illusive spell; and though, half an hour before, we had blessed the applauding bursts of the audience, like omens of propitious thunder, we were now half-impatient of their frequency and duration, because they intruded on a still higher pleasure, and because we needed no assurance that Miss Kemble's success was sealed.

Feeling that the occasion formed an era in our recollections of the theatre, we compared her, in our imagination, with all the great actresses we had; and it is singular, though we can allege nothing like personal likeness, that Mrs. Jordan was the one whom she brought back, in the first instance, to our memory. We might have set down this idea as purely fanciful, if we had not learned that it has crossed the minds of other observers. As form and features seem to have nothing to do with this reminiscence, we attribute it to the exquisite naturalness of Miss Kemble's manner, and we cannot help connecting it with an anticipation that she will one day be as pre-eminently the comic as the tragic muse of our stage.

Her traits of family resemblance struck us most powerfully in the deeper and more earnest parts of her tragic performance. On one occasion, when her face only was revealed by her drapery, its intense expression brought Mrs. Siddons most vividly back to us. Miss Kemble's personal qualifications for her profession are, indeed, such as we might expect from one so parented and related. Her head is nobly formed and admirably placed on her shoulders—her brow is expansive and shaded by very dark hair—her eyes are full of a gifted soul, and her features are significant of intellect to a very extraordinary degree. Though scarcely reaching the middle height, she is finely proportioned, and she moves with such dignity and decision that it is only on recollection we discover she is not tall. In boldness and dignity of action she unquestionably approaches more nearly to Mrs. Siddons than any actress of our time excepting Pasta. Her voice, whilst it is perfectly feminine in its tones, is of great compass, and though, perhaps, not yet entirely within her command, gives proof of being able to express the sweetest emotions without monotony, and the sternest passions without harshness. She seems to know the stage by intuition, "as native there and to the manner born," and she understands even now, by what magic we cannot divine, the precise effect she will produce on the most distant spectators. She treads the stage as if she had been matured by the study and practice of years. We dreamed for a while of being able to analyze her acting, and to fix in our memory the finest moments of its power and grace; but her attitudes glide into each other so harmoniously that we at last gave up enumerating how often she seemed a study to the painter's eye and a vision to the poet's heart.

At the first sight, Miss Kemble's countenance conveys an impression of extraordinary intellect, and the manifestation of that faculty is a pervading charm of her acting. It gives her courage, it gives her promptitude—the power of seeing what is to be done, and of doing it without faltering or hesitation. She always aims at the highest effect, and almost always succeeds in realizing her finest conceptions.

The Juliet of Shakspeare is young and beautiful; but no mistake can be greater than the idea that her character can be impersonated with probability by a merely beautiful young woman. Juliet is a being of rich imagination; her eloquence breathes an ethereal spirit; and her heroic devotedness is as different from common-place romance, as superficial gilding is unlike the solid ore. By many an observer, the beautiful surface of her character is alone appreciated, and not that force and grandeur in it which is capable of sustaining itself in harmony, not only with the luxuriant commencement of the piece, but with the funeral terrors of its tragic close. Hence the expectation has been so often excited, that a lovely girl, who can look the character very innocently, and speak the garden-scene very prettily, is quite sufficient to be a representative of the heroine throughout; and hence the same expectation has been so often disappointed. The debutante may be often carried, without apparent failure, through a scene or two, by her beauty and pretty manner of love-making; but when the tragedy commences in earnest, her intellectual expression sinks under its terrors, and she appears no more than a poor young lady, driven mad with the vexation of love.

Far remote from this description is the Juliet of Miss Kemble. It never was our fortune to see Mrs. Siddons in the part, but Miss Kemble gives it a depth of tragic tone which none of her predecessors whom we have seen ever gave to it. Miss O'Neil, loth as we are to forget her fascinations, used to lighten the earlier scenes of the piece with some girlish graces that were accused of being infantine. Be that as it may, there were certainly a hundred little prettinesses enacted by hundreds of novices in the character, which attracted habitual applauses, but which Miss Kemble at once repudiated with the wise audacity of genius; at the same time, though she blends not a particle of affected girlishness with the part of Juliet, her youth and her truth still leave in it a Shakspearian *naiveté*. As the tragedy deepens, her powers are developed in unison with the strengthened decision of purpose which the poet gives to the character. What a noble effect she produced in that scene where the Nurse, who had hitherto been the partner of all her counsels, recommends her to marry Paris, and to her astonished exclamation, "Speak'st thou from thy heart?" answers, "And from my soul too, or else beshrew them both." At that momentous passage Miss Kemble erected her head, and extended her arm, with an expressive air which we never saw surpassed in acting, and with a power like magic pronounced "Amen!" In that attitude, and look, and word, she made us feel that Juliet, so late a nurseling, was now left alone in the world—that the child was gone, and that the heroic woman had begun her part. By her change of tone and manner she showed that her heart was wound up to fulfil its destiny, and she bids the Nurse "Go in," in a tone of dignified command. That there was such a change in Juliet we have always felt, but to mark its precise moment was reserved for this accomplished actress in a single tone.

It is hardly needless to say, that Mr. Kemble's Mercutio was delightful, independent even of the gallant spirit with which he carried off the weight of his anxieties on the first evening. It was charmingly looked, acted, and spoken—with only one little touch of baser matter in the mimickry of the Nurse—and closed by a death true to nature, and exhibiting, in milder light, all the brilliant traits of the character. Warde showed his good feeling in accepting the part of Friar Laurence, and his good taste in speaking the poetry of which it is made up: Mrs. Davenport played the Nurse as excellently as she has played it for the last twenty years, and not better than she will play it for twenty years to come; and Mrs. Kemble went through the little she had to do in Lady Capulet with true motherly grace.

THE MELO-DRAMAS AGAINST GAMBLING.

[New Monthly Magazine.]

There is at Paris, where all extremes meet, a kind of sub-theatrical public, which makes amends for the severity of the orthodox dramatic code, by running wild after the most extravagant violations of all rules, and the strangest outrages on feeling and taste. Thus the members of this living paradox keep the balance even, and avenge the beautiful and the romantic. If they turn away with disgust from the Weird Sisters, and defy the magic in the web of Othello's handkerchief, they dote on Mr. Cooke in the Monster, and consecrate ribands to his fame. If they refuse to pardon the grave-diggers in Hamlet, they seek for materials of absorbing interest in the charnel-house which no divine philosophy illumines. If they refuse to tragedy any larger bounds of time than their own classical poets could occupy with frigid declamations, they will select three days from distant parts of a wretched and criminal life, in order to exhibit in full and odious perfection, the horrors which two fifteen years of atrocity can accumulate and mature. Of all the examples of the daring side of their eternal antithesis, the melo-drama against gambling, produced within the last few months, is the most extraordinary and the most successful. Each act is crowded with incidents, in which the only relief from the basest fraud and the most sickening selfishness is to be found in deeds which would chill the blood if it had leisure to freeze. We do not only "sup full of horrors," but breakfast and dine on them also. A youth, who on the eve of his wedding-day sells the jewels of his bride to gamble with the price, and who deceives her by the most paltry equivocations; a friend, who supplies this youth with substituted diamonds which he has himself stolen; a broken-hearted father who dies cursing his son; and a seduction of the wife, filthily attempted while the husband is evading the officers of justice, are among the attractions which should enchain the attention, and gently arouse curiosity in the first act of this fascinating drama. The second act, exhibiting the same pair of fiends, after a lapse of fifteen years, is replete with appropriate fraud, heartlessness, and misery. But the last act crowns all, and completes the "moral lesson." Here, after another fifteen years passed in the preparatory school of guilt, the hero verging on old age is represented as in the most squalid penury—an outcast from society, starving with a wife bent down by suffering, and a family of most miserable children crying for bread. His first exploit is to plunder a traveller, murder him, and hide his body in the sand; but this is little; the horror is only beginning. While his last murder is literally "sticking on his hands," his old tempter and companion, who had attempted to seduce his wife and had utterly blasted his fortunes, enters his hut, ragged and destitute, and by a few sentences rekindles the old love of play, and engages him in schemes of fraudulent gaming. After this little scene of more subdued interest, the party leave the hut to inter the corpse of the assassinated traveller, and give opportunity for the entrance of the eldest son of the hero, and his recognition by his mother. In her brief absence, contrived for this special occasion, the friends resolve on murdering the youth, of whose name they are ignorant; the father watches while his familiar stabs the stranger on his couch; and just as the full horror is discovered, a thunderbolt sets fire to the dwelling of iniquity, and the father hurls his tempter into the flames and follows him! Such is the piece which has delighted the dainty critics of Paris, who revolt from Julius Cæsar as bloody, and characterize Hamlet as "the work of a drunken savage."

But the most offensive circumstance attendant on the production of this bloody trash is the pretence that it is calculated to advance the cause of morality by deterring from the passion of gambling. What a libel is this on poor human nature! Of what stuff must that nature be made, if it could receive benefit from such shocking pictures as representations affecting it nearly! No longer must we regard it as a thing of passion and weakness,—erring, frail, and misguided, yet full of noble impulses and gentle compassions and traits, indicating a heavenly origin and an immortal home; but moulded of low selfishness, and animated by demoniac fury. If earth has ever produced such beings as are here exposed on the scene, they are not specimens of any class of humanity, but its monsters. And on what minds is the exhibition to operate? On such as contain within themselves a conscious disposition to its atrocities, if any such there be, or on the rest of mankind, who sicken at the sight? The first are far beyond the reach of the actor's preaching; the last feel the lesson is not for them—if they indulge in gambling, they have no fear of murdering their sons, and "their withers are unwrung." In the mean time the "moral lesson," impotent for good, has a mischievous power to wear out the sources of sympathy, and to produce a dangerous familiarity with the forms of guilt, which according to the solemn warnings of Sir Thomas Browne, "have oft-times a sin even in their histories." "We desire," continues this quaint but noble writer, "no records of such enormities; sins should be accounted new, that so they may be esteemed monstrous; they omit of monstrosity as they fall from their rarity; for men count it venial to err with their forefathers, and foolishly conceive they divide a sin in its society. The pens of men may sufficiently expatiate without these singularities of villany; for, as they increase the hatred of vice in some, so do they enlarge the theory of wickedness in all. And this is one thing that may make latter ages worse than the former, for the vicious example of ages past poisons the curiosity of these present, affording a hint of sin unto seduceable spirits, and soliciting those unto the imitation of them, whose heads were never so perversely principled as to invent them. In things of this nature, silence commendeth history; it is the veniable part of things lost; wherein there must never rise a Pancovillus, nor remain any register but that of Hell." The murderous phantasm of Paris will never deter men from becoming gamblers, who have the fatal passion within them, but it may assist in making gamblers demons.

In London this piece has, we are happy to find, succeeded only in the minor houses, where the audience are accustomed to look for coarse and violent stimulants. It was first produced at the Coburgh; and, assisted by splendid scenery and powerful melo-dramatic acting, was attractive for some time; but has given way to real operas, got up with great liberality, and the graceful performances of a young gentleman named Smith, who acts with more taste and feeling than the clever aspirants of his age usually exhibit. It was afterwards announced at both the winter theatres; but, fortunately for Covent-Garden, Drury Lane obtained the precedence, and the good sense of Mr. Kemble profited by the example set before him. Here the enormities were somewhat foreshortened, being compressed into two acts, but unredeemed by a single trait of kind or noble emotion. Cooper, as the more potent devil, and Wallack, as his disgusting tool, played with considerable energy; but no talent could alleviate the mingled sense of sickness and suffocation with which their slimy infamies oppressed the spectators. Although much curiosity had been excited, the piece did not draw, and was speedily laid aside; while at Covent-Garden, where its announcement was dignified by the names of Kemble, Ward, and Miss Kelly, it was most wisely suppressed in the shell. At the Adelphi, we have been told that it was rendered somewhat less revolting; but we could not muster courage to face it here, or even to endure it in the improved version of the Surrey, where, according to the play-bills, the Manager has, "after due correction, reformed his hero, and restored him to happiness and virtue." What a fine touch of maudlin morality! To hear Elliston deliver it from the stage with all the earnestness of his mock-heroic style, we would undergo the purgatory with which he threatens us. He is the reforming Quaker of dramatic legislation, and his stage, during the run of the piece, was a court of ease to Brixton, as Drury-Lane was to Newgate. Nothing can equal the benevolent discrimination of his theory, except that of a popular preacher whom we once heard deprecating the orthodox doctrine of the eternity of future punishment, and cheering his audience with the invigorating hope, that, after being tormented for three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, the wicked would be made good and happy. We are thankful, nevertheless, that Mr. Elliston's tread-mill for gamblers has rested with the axes and ropes of his more sanguinary rivals; and that the young gentlemen addicted to play have finished their lesson. How it may operate in Paris and the neighbourhood of St. James's, will be ascertained in the ensuing winter.

ON THE INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER OF THE LATE WILLIAM HAZLITT.

[FROM "THE EXAMINER" AND "THE REVIEW OF WILLIAM HAZLITT."]

As an author, Mr. Hazlitt may be contemplated principally in three aspects,—as a moral and political reasoner; as an observer of character and manners; and as a critic in literature and painting. It is in the first character only, that he should be followed with caution. His metaphysical and political essays contain rich treasures, sought with years of patient toil, and poured forth with careless prodigality,—materials for thinking, a small part of which wisely employed, will enrich him who makes them his own,—but the choice is not wholly unattended with perplexity and danger. He had, indeed, as passionate a desire for truth as others have for wealth, or power, or fame. The purpose of his research was always steady and pure; and no temptation from without could induce him to pervert or to conceal the faith that was in him. But, besides that love of truth, that sincerity in pursuing it, and that boldness in telling it, he had earnest aspirations after the beautiful, a strong sense of pleasure, an intense consciousness of his own individual being, which broke the current of abstract speculation into dazzling eddies, and sometimes turned it astray. The vivid sense of beauty may, indeed, have fit home in the breast of the searcher after truth,—but then he must also be endowed with the highest of all human faculties, the great mediatory and interfusing power of imagination, which presides supreme in the mind, brings all its powers and impulses into harmonious action, and becomes itself the single organ of all. At its touch, truth becomes visible in the shapes of beauty; the fairest of material things appear the living symbols of airy thought; and the mind apprehends the finest affinities of the worlds of sense and of spirit "in clear dream and solemn vision." By its aid the faculties are not only balanced, but multiplied into each other; are pervaded by one feeling, and directed to one issue. But, without it, the inquirer after truth will sometimes be confounded by too intense a yearning after the grand and the lovely,—not, indeed, by an elegant taste, the indulgence of which is a graceful and harmless recreation amidst severer studies, but by that passionate regard which quickens the pulse, and tingles in the veins, and "hangs upon the beatings of the heart." Such was the power of beauty in Hazlitt's mind; and the interfusing faculty was wanting. The spirit, indeed, was willing, but the flesh was strong; and when these contend, it is not difficult to foretell which will obtain the mastery; for "the power of beauty shall sooner transform honesty from what it is into a bawd, than the power of honesty shall transform beauty into its likeness." How this some-time paradox became exemplified in the writings of one whose purpose was always single, may be traced in the history of his mind, at which it may be well to glance before adverting to the examples.

William Hazlitt was the son of a dissenting minister, who presided over a small Unitarian congregation at Wem, in Shropshire. His father was one of those blameless enthusiasts who, taking only one view of the question between right and power, embrace it with singleness of heart, and hold it fast with inflexible purpose. He cherished in his son that attachment to truth for its own sake, and those habits of fearless investigation which are the natural defences of a creed maintaining its ground against the indolent force of a wealthy establishment, and the fervid attacks of combining sectaries, without the fascinations of mystery or terror. In the solitude of the country, his pupil learned, at an early age, to think. But that solitude was something more to him than a noiseless study, in which he might fight over the battle between Filmer and Locke; or exult on the shattered dogmas of Calvin; or rivet the links of the immortal chain of necessity, and strike with the force of ponderous understanding, on all mental fetters. A temperament of unusual ardour glowed amidst those lonely fields, and imparted to the silent objects of nature a weight of interest akin to that with which Rousseau has oppressed the picture of his early years. He had not then, nor did he find till long afterwards, power to imbody his meditations and feelings in words; the consciousness of thoughts which he could not hope adequately to express, increased his natural reserve; and he turned for relief to the art of painting, in which he might silently realize his dreams of beauty, and repay the bounties of nature. A few old prints from the old masters awakened the spirit of emulation within him; the sense of beauty became identified in his mind with that of glory and duration; while the peaceful labour calmed the tumult in his veins, and gave steadiness to his pure and distant aim. He pursued the art with an earnestness and patience which he vividly describes in his essay "On the Pleasure of Painting;" and to which he frequently reverts in some of his most exquisite passages; and, although in this, his chosen pursuit, he failed, the passionate desire for success, and the long struggle to attain it, left deep traces in his mind, heightening his strong perception of external things, and mingling, with all the thoughts, shapes and hues which he had vainly striven to render immortal. A painter may acquire a fine insight into the nice distinctions of character,—he may copy manners in words as he does in colours,—but it may be apprehended that his course as a severe reasoner will be somewhat "troubled with thick coming fancies." And if the successful pursuit of art may thus disturb the process of abstract contemplation, how much more may an unsatisfied passion ruffle it, bid the dark threads of thought glitter with radiant fancies unrealized, and clothe its diagrams with the fragments of picture which the hand refused to execute! What wonder, if, in the mind of an ardent youth, thus struggling in vain to give palpable existence to the shapes of loveliness which haunted him, "the homely beauty of the good old cause" should assume the fascinations not properly its own! At this time, also, while at once laborious and listless, he became the associate of a band of young poets of power and promise such as England had not produced for two centuries, whose genius had been awakened by the rising sun of liberty, and breathed forth most eloquent music. Their political creed resembled his own; yet, for the better and more influential part, they were poets, not metaphysicians; and his intercourse with them tended yet farther to spread the noble infection of beauty through all his thoughts. That they should have partially understood him at that time was much, both for them and for him; for the faculty of expression remained imperfect and doubtful until quickened at that chosen home of genius and kindness, the fire-side of the author of "John Woodvil." There his bashful struggles to express the fine conceptions with which his bosom laboured were met by entire sympathy; there he began to stammer out his just and original notions of Chaucer and Spenser, and old English writers, less talked of, though not less known, by their countrymen; there he was understood and cheered by one who thought after their antique mode, and wrote in their spirit, and by a lady, "sister every way" to his friend, whose fine discernment of his first efforts in conversation, he dwelt upon with gratitude even when most out of humour with the world. He wrote then slowly, and with great difficulty, being, as he himself states in his "Letter to Gifford," "eight years in writing as many pages;" in that austere labour the sense of the beautiful was rebuked, and his first work, the "Essay on the Principles of Human Action," is composed in a style as dry and hard as a mathematical demonstration. But when his pen was loosed from its long bondage, the accumulated stores of thought and observation pressed upon him; images of beauty hovered round him; deep-rooted attachments to books and works of art, which had been friends to him through silent years, glowed for expression, and a long arrear of personal resentments struggled to share in the masterdom of conscious power. The room of Imagination, which would have enabled him to command all his resources, and place his rare experiences to their true account, was supplied by a *will*—sufficiently sturdy by nature, and made irritable and capricious by the most inexcusable misrepresentation and abuse with which the virulence of party-spirit ever disgraced literary criticism. His works were shamelessly garbled; his person and habits slandered; and volumes, any one page of which contained thought sufficient to supply a whole "Quarterly Review," were dismissed with affected contempt, as the drivelling of an impudent pretender, whose judgment was to be estimated by an enthusiastic expression torn from its context, and of whose English style a decisive specimen was found in an error of the press. Thus was a temperament, always fervid, stung into irregular action; the strong regard to things was matched by as vivid a dislike of persons; and the sense of injury joined with the sense of beauty to disturb the solemn musings of the philosopher and the great hatreds of the patriots.

One of the most remarkable effects of the strong sense of the *personal* on Hazlitt's abstract speculations, is a habit of confounding his own feelings and experiences in relation to a subject with proofs of some theory which had grown out of them, or had become associated with them. Thus, in his "Essay on the Past and the Future," he asserts the startling proposition, that the past is, at any given moment, of as much consequence to the individual as the future; that he has no more actual interest in what is to come than in what has gone by, except so far as he may think himself able to avert the future by action; that whether he was put to torture a year ago, or anticipates the rack a year hence, is of no importance, if his destiny is so fixed that no effort can alter it; and this paradox its author chiefly seeks to establish by beautiful instances of what the past, as matter of contemplation, is to thoughtful minds, and in fine glances at his individual history. The principal sophism consists in varying the aspect in which the past and future are viewed;—in one paragraph, regarding them as apart from personal identity and consciousness, as if a being, who was "not a child of time," looked down upon them; and, in another, speaking in his own person as one who feels the past as well as future in the instant. When the quarrels with a supposed disputant who would rather not have been Claude, because then all would have been over with him, and asserts that it cannot signify when we live, because the value of existence is not altered in the course of centuries, he takes a stand apart from present consciousness and the immediate question—for the desire to have been Claude could only be gratified in the consciousness of having been Claude—which belongs to the present moment, and implies present existence in the party making the choice, though for such a moment he might be willing to die. He strays still wider from the subject when he observes a treatise on the Millennium is dull; but asks who was ever weary of reading the fables of the Golden Age? for both fables essentially belong neither to past nor future, and depend for their interest, not on the time to which they are referred, but the vividness with which they are drawn. But supposing the Golden Age and the Millennium to be happy conditions of being—which to our poor, frail, shivering virtue they are *not*—and the proposal to be made, whether we would remember the first, or enter upon the last, surely we should "hail the coming on of time," and prefer having our store of happiness yet to expend, to the knowledge that we had just spent it! When Mr. Hazlitt instances the agitation of criminals before their trial, and their composure after their conviction, as proofs that if a future event is certain, "it gives little more disturbance or emotion than if it had already taken place, or were something to happen in another state of being, or to another person," he gives an example which is perfectly fair, but which every one sees is decisive against his theory. If peace followed when hope was no longer busy; if the quiet of indifference was the same thing as the stillness of despair; if the palsy of fear did not partially anticipate the stroke of death, and whiten the devoted head with premature age; there might be some ground for this sacrifice of the future at the shrine of the past; but the poor wretch who grasps the hand of the chaplain or the under-sheriff's clerk, or a turnkey, or an alderman, in convulsive agony, as his last hold on life, and declares that he is happy, would tell a different tale! It seems strange that so profound a thinker, and so fair a reasoner, as Mr. Hazlitt, should adduce such a proof of such an hypothesis—but the mystery is solved when we regard the mass of personal feeling he has brought to bear on the subject, and which has made his own view of it unsteady. All this picturesque and affecting retrospection amounts to nothing, or rather tells against the argument; because the store of contemplation which *is*, *will* ever be while consciousness remains; nay, must increase even while we reckon it, as the present glides into the past, and turns another arch over the cave of memory. This very possession which he would set against the future is the only treasure which with certainty belongs to it, and of which no change of fortune can deprive him; and, therefore, it is clear that the essayist mistakes a sentiment for a demonstration, when he expatiates upon it as proof of such a doctrine. There is nothing affected in the assertion—no desire to startle—no playing with the subject or the reader; for of such intellectual trickeries he was incapable; but an honest mistake into which the strong power of personal recollection, and the desire to secure it within the lasting fret-work of a theory, drew him. So, when wearied with the injustice done to his writings by the profligate misrepresentations of the government critics, and the slothful acquiescence of the public, and contrasting with it the success of the sturdy players at his favourite game of *fives*, which no one could question, he wrote elaborate essays[*] to prove the superiority of physical qualifications to those of intellect—full of happy illustrations and striking instances, and containing one inimitable bit of truth and pathos "On the Death of Cavanagh,"—but *all beside the mark*—proving nothing but that which required no proof—that corporeal strength and beauty are more speedily and more surely appreciated than the products of genius; and leaving the essential differences of the two, of the transitory and the lasting—of that which is confined to a few barren spectators, and that which is diffused through the hearts and affections of thousands, and fructifies and expands in generations yet unborn, and connects its author with far distant times, not by cold renown, but by the links of living sympathy—to be exemplified in the very essay which would decry it, and to be nobly vindicated by its author at other times, when he shows, and makes us feel, that "words are the only things which last for ever."[*] So his attacks on the doctrine of utility, which were provoked by the cold extravagancies of some of its supporters, consist of noble and passionate eulogies on the graces, pleasures, and ornaments, of life, which leave the theory itself, with which all these are consistent, precisely where it was. So his "Essays on Mr. Owen's View of Society" are full of exquisite banter, well-directed against the individual: of unanswerable expositions of the falsehood of his pretensions to novelty and of the quackery by which he attempted to render them notorious; of happy satire against the aristocratic and religious patronage which he sought and obtained for schemes which were tolerated by the great because they were believed by them to be impracticable; but the truth of the principal idea itself remains almost untouched. In these instances the *personal* has prevailed over the *abstract* in the mind of the thinker; his else clear intellectual vision has been obscured by the intervention of his own recollections, loves, resentments, or fancies; and the real outlines of the subject have been overgrown by the exuberant fertility of the region which bordered upon them.

The same causes diminished the immediate effect of Mr. Hazlitt's political writings. It was the fashion to denounce him as a sour Jacobin; but no description could be more unjust. Under the influence of some bitter feeling, he occasionally poured out a furious invective against those whom he regarded as the enemies of liberty, or the apostates from its cause; but, in general, his force was diverted (unconsciously to himself) by figures and fantasies, by fine and quaint allusions, by quotations from his favourite authors, introduced with singular felicity as respects the direct link of association, but tending by their very beauty to unnerve the mind of the reader, and substitute the sense of luxury for that of hatred or anger. In some of his essays, when the reasoning is most cogent, every other sentence contains some exquisite passage from Shakspeare, or Fletcher, or Wordsworth, trailing after it a line of golden associations—or some reference to a novel, over which we have a thousand times forgotten the wrongs of mankind; till in the recurring shock of pleasurable surprise, the main argument escapes us. When, for example, he compares the position of certain political waverers to that of Clarissa Harlowe when Lovelace would repeat his outrage, and describes them as having been, like her, trepanned into a house of ill-fame near Pall Mall, and defending their soiled virtue with their pen-knives,—who, at the suggestion of the stupendous scene which the allusion directly revives, can think or care about the renegade of yesterday? Here, again, is felt the want of that imagination which brings all things into one, tinges all our thoughts and sympathies with one joyous or solemn hue, and rejects every ornament which does not heighten or prolong the feeling which is proper to the design. Even when Mr. Hazlitt retaliates on Mr. Southey for attacking his old co-patriots, the poetical associations which bitter remembrance suggests almost neutralize the attack, else overpowering; he brings every "flower which sad embroidery wears to strew the laureate hearse," where patriotism is interred; and diverts our indignation and his own by affecting references to an early friendship. So little does he regard the unity of his compositions, that in his "Letter to Gifford," after a series of the most just and bitter retorts on his maligner,—"the fine link which connected literature with the police"—he takes a fancy to teach that "Ultra-crepidarian Critic" his own theory of the natural disinterestedness of the human mind, and developes it—not now in the mathematical style in which it was first enunciated, but "o'er-informed" with the glow of sentiment, and terminating in an eloquent rhapsody. This latter part of the letter is one of the noblest of his effusions, but it entirely destroys the first in the mind of the reader; for who, when thus contemplating the living wheels on which human benevolence is borne onward in its triumphant career, and the spirit with which they are instinct, can think of the poor wasp settled upon them, and who was just before transfixed with minikin arrows?

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[*] "On the Indian Jugglers," and "On the Disadvantages of Intellectual Superiority."

[*] "On Thought and Action."

But the most signal result which "the shows of things" had over Mr. Hazlitt's mind, was his setting up the Emperor Napoleon as his idol. He strove to justify his predilection to himself by referring it to the revolutionary origin of his hero, and the contempt with which he trampled upon the claims of legitimacy, and humbled the pride of kings. But if his "only love" thus sprung "from his only hate," it was not wholly cherished by antipathies. If there had been nothing in his mind which tended to aggrandizement and glory, and which would fain reconcile the principles of liberty with the lavish accumulation of power, he might have desired the triumph of young tyranny over legitimate thrones; but he would scarcely have watched its progress "like a lover and a child." His feeling for Bonaparte was not a sentiment of respect for fallen greatness: not a desire to trace "the soul of goodness in things evil;" not a loathing of the treatment the emperor received from "his cousin kings" in the day of adversity; but entire affection mingling with the current of the blood, and pervading the moral and intellectual being.[*] Nothing less than this strong attachment, at once personal and refined, would have enabled him to encounter the toil of collecting and arranging facts and dates for four volumes of narrative;—a drudgery too abhorrent to his habits of mind as a thinker, to be sustained by any stimulus which the prospect of wealth or reputation could supply. It is not so much in the ingenious excuses which he discovers for the worst acts of his hero, even for the midnight execution of the Duke d'Enghein, and the invasion of Spain, that the stamp of personal devotion is obvious, as in the graphic force with which he has delineated the short-lived splendours of the Imperial Court, and "the trivial fond records" he has gathered of every vestige of human feeling by which he could reconcile the Emperor to his mind. The first two volumes of the "Life of Napoleon," although redeemed by scattered thoughts of true originality and depth, are often confused and spiritless; the characters of the principal revolutionists are drawn too much in the style of caricatures; but when the hero throws all his rivals into the distance, erects himself the individual enemy of England, consecrates his power by religious ceremonies, and defines it by the circle of a crown, the author's strength becomes concentrated, his narrative assumes an epic dignity and fervour, and glows with "the long-resounding march and energy divine." How happy and proud is he to picture the meeting of Napoleon with the Pope, and the grandeurs of the coronation! How he grows wanton in celebrating the fêtes of the Tuileries, as "presenting all the elegance of enchanted pageants," and laments them as "gone like a fairy revel!" How he "lives along the line" of Austerlitz, and rejoices in its thunder, and hails its setting sun, and exults in the minutest details of the subsequent meeting of the conquered sovereigns with the conqueror! How he expatiates on the fatal marriage with the "deadly Austrian," (as Mr. Cobbett justly called that most heartless of her sex,) as though it were a chapter in romance, and added the grace of beauty to the imperial picture! How he kindles with martial ardour as he describes the preparations for the expedition against Russia; musters the myriads of barbarians with a show of dramatic justice; and fondly lingers among the brief triumphs of Moskwa on the verge of the terrible catastrophe! The narrative of that disastrous expedition is, indeed, written with a master's hand; we see the "Grand Army" marching to its destruction through the immense perspective; the wild hordes flying before the terror of its "coming;" the barbaric magnificence of Moscow towering in the far distance; and when we gaze upon the sacrificial conflagration of the Kremlin, we feel that it is the funeral pile of the conqueror's glories. It is well for the readers of this splendid work, that there is more in it of the painter than of the metaphysician; that its style glows with the fervour of battle, or stiffens with the spoils of victory; yet we wonder that this monument to imperial grandeur should be raised from the dead level of Jacobinism by an honest and profound thinker. The solution is, that although he was this, he was also more—that, in *opinion*, he was devoted to the cause of the people; but that, in *feeling*, he required some individual object of worship; that he selected Napoleon as one in whose origin and career he might impersonate his principles and gratify his affections; and that he adhered to his own idea with heroic obstinacy when the "child and champion of the republic" openly sought to repress all feeling and thought, but such as he could cast in his own iron moulds, and scoffed at popular enthusiasm even while it bore him to the accomplishment of his loftiest desires.

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[*] Proofs of the singular fascination which the idea of Bonaparte created on Mr. Hazlitt's mind abound in his writings. One example of which suffices to show how it mingled with his most passionate thoughts—his earliest aspirations, and his latest sympathies. Having referred to some association which revived the memory of his happiest days, he breathes out into this rhapsody:—"As I look on the long-neglected copy of the Death of Clorinda, golden dreams play upon the canvas as they used when I painted it. The flowers of Hope and Joy springing up in my mind, recall the time when they first bloomed there. The years that are fled knock at the door and enter. I am in the Louvre once more *The Sun of Austerlitz has not set. It shines here, in my heart; and he the Son of Glory is not dead, nor ever shall be to me.* I am as when my life began."—See the Essay on "Great and Little Things." *Table Talk*, vol. ii., p 171.

If the experiences and the sympathies which acted so powerfully on the mind of Hazlitt, detract somewhat from his authority as a reasoner, they give an unprecedented interest and value to his essays on character and books. The excellence of these works differ not so much in degree as in kind from that of all others of their class. There is a weight and substance about them, which makes us feel that amidst all their nice and dexterous analysis, they are, in no small measure, creations. The quantity of thought which is accumulated upon his favourite subjects; the variety and richness of the illustrations; and the strong sense of beauty and pleasure which pervades and animates the composition, give them a place, if not above, yet apart from the writings of all other essayists. They have not, indeed, the dramatic charm of the old "Spectator" and "Tattler," not the airy touch with which Addison and Steele skimmed along the surface of many-coloured life; but they disclose the subtle essences of character, and trace the secret springs of the affections with a more learned and penetrating spirit of human dealing than either. The intense interest which he takes in his theme, and which prompts him to adorn it lavishly with the spoils of many an intellectual struggle, commends it to the feelings as well as the understanding, and makes the thread of his argument seem to us like a fibre of our own moral being. Thus his essay on "Pedantry" seems, within its few pages, to condense not only all that can be *said*, but all that can be *felt*, on the happiness which we derive from the force of habit, on the softening influences of blameless vanity, and on the moral and picturesque effect of those peculiarities of manner, arising from professional associations, which diversify and emboss the plain groundwork of modern life. Thus, his character of *Rousseau* is not merely a just estimate of the extraordinary person to whom it relates, but is so imbued with the predominant feeling of his works that they seem to glide in review before us, and we rise from the essayist as if we had pursued the "Confessions" anew with him, and had partaken in the strong sympathy which they excited within him during the happiest summers of his youth. Thus, his paper on "Actors and Acting," breathes the very soul of abandonment to impulse and heedless enjoyment, affording glimpses of those brief triumphs which make a stroller's career "less forlorn," and presenting mirrors to the stage in which its grand and affecting images, themselves reflected from nature, are yet farther prolonged and multiplied. His individual portraits of friends and enemies are hit off with all the strength of hatred or affection, neither mitigated by courtesy nor mistrust:—partial, as they embrace, at most, only one aspect of the character, but startling in their vividness, and productive of infinite amusement to those who are acquainted with the originals. It must be conceded that these personal references were sometimes made with unjustifiable freedom; but they were more rarely prompted by malice prepense, than by his strong consciousness of the eccentricities of mankind, which pressed upon him for expression, and irritated his pen into satiric picture. And when this keen observance was exerted on scenes in which he delighted—as the Wednesday evening parties of Mr. Lamb's—how fine, how genial, how happy his delineations! How he gathers up the precious moments, when poets and artists known to fame, and men of fancy and wit yet unexhausted by publication, met in careless pleasure; and distils their finest essence. And if sometimes the temptation of making a spiteful hit at one of his friends was too urgent for resistance, what amends he made by some oblique compliment, at once as hearty and as refined as those by which Pope has made those whom he loved immortal. But these essays, in which the spirit of personality sometimes runs riot, are inferior, in our apprehension, to those in which it warms and peoples more abstracted views of humanity—not purely metaphysical reasonings, which it tended to disturb,[*] nor political disquisitions which it checked and turned from their aim; but estimates of the high condition and solemn incidents of our nature. Of this class, his papers on the "Love of Life," on the "Fear of Death," on the "Reasons why Distant Objects Please," on "Antiquity," on the "Love of the Country," and on "Living to Oneself," are choice specimens, written with equal earnestness and ingenuity, and full of noble pieces of retrospection on his own past being. Beyond their immediate objects of contemplation, there is always opened a moral perspective; and the tender hues of memory gleam and tremble over them.

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[*] Of the writers since Hume, who have written on metaphysics, with the severity proper to the subject, are Mr. Fearne, the author of the Essay on "Consciousness," and Lady Mary Shepherd, whose works on "Cause and Effect" are amongst the most remarkable productions of the age. Beattie, Dugald Stewart, Dr. Brown, and his imitators, turned what should have been abstract reasoning "to favour and to prettiness." Mr. Hazlitt obscured it by thickly clustered associations; and Coleridge presented it in the masquerade of a gorgeous fancy. Lady Mary Shepherd, on the other hand, is a thinker of as much honesty as courage; her speculations are colourless, and leave nothing on the mind but the fine-drawn lines of thought. Coleridge, addressing the Duchess of Devonshire, on a spirited verse she had written on the heroism of Tell, asks—

> "O lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure,
> Where got ye that heroic measure?"

The poet might have found in the reasonings of Lady Mary Shepherd a worthier object of admiration than in the little stanza which seemed so extraordinary an effort for a lady of fashion.

"Books," says Mr. Wordsworth, "are a substantial world," and surely those on which Hazlitt has expatiated with true regard, have assumed, to our apprehensions, a stouter reality since we surveyed them through the medium of his mind. In general, the effect of criticism, even when fairly and tenderly applied, is the reverse of this; for the very process of subjecting the creations of the poet and the novelist to examination as works of art, and of estimating the force of passion or of habit, as exemplified in them, so necessarily implies that they are but the shadows of thought, as insensibly to dissipate the illusion which our dreamy youth had perchance cast around them. But in all that Hazlitt has written on old English authors, he is seldom merely critical. His masterly exposition of that huge book of fantastical fallacies, the vaunted "Arcadia" of Sir Philip Sidney,[*] stands almost alone in his works as a specimen of the mere power of unerring dissection and impartial judgment. In the laboratory of his intellect, analysis was turned to the sweet uses of alchemy. While he discourses of characters he has known the longest, he sheds over them the light of his own boyhood, and makes us partakers of that realizing power by which they become creatures of flesh and blood, with whom we may eat, drink, and be merry. He bids us enjoy all that he has enjoyed in their society; invites us to gaze, as he did first, on that setting sun which Schiller's heroic Robber watched in his sadness, and makes us feel that to us "that sun will never set;" or introduces us to honest old Deckar on the borders of Salisbury Plain, when he struck a bargain for life with the best creation of the poet's genius. "After a long walk" with him "through unfrequented tracks —after starting the hare from the fern, or hearing the wing of the raven rustle above our heads, being greeted by the woodman's stern 'good night,' as he strikes into his narrow homeward path," we too "take our ease at our inn beside the blazing hearth, and shake hands with Signor Orlando Friscobaldo as the oldest acquaintance we have."[†] He has increased our personal knowledge of Don Quixote, of John Buncle, of Parson Adams, of Pamela, of Clarissa Harlowe, of Lovelace, of Sir Roger de Coverly, and a hundred other undying teachers of humanity, and placed us on nearer and dearer terms with them. His cordial warmth brings out their pleasantest and most characteristic traits as heat makes visible the writing which a lover's caution has traced in colourless liquid; and he thus attests their reality with an evidence like that of the senses. He restored the "Beggar's Opera," which had been long treated as a burlesque appendage to the "Newgate Calendar," to its proper station; showing how the depth of the design, and the brilliancy of the workmanship, had been overlooked in the palpable coarseness of the materials; and tracing instances of pathos and germs of morality amidst scenes which the world had agreed to censure and to enjoy as vulgar and immoral.[*] He revels in the delights of old English comedy; exhibits the soul of art in its town-born graces, and the spirit of gayety in its mirth; detects for us a more delicate flavour in the wit of Congreve, and lights up the age of Charles the Second, "when kings and nobles led purely ornamental lives," with the airy and harmless splendour in which it streamed upon him amidst rustic manners and Presbyterian virtues. But his accounts of many of the dramatists of Shakspeare's age are less happy; for he had no early acquaintance with these that he should receive them into his own heart, and commend them to ours; he read them that he might lecture upon them,—and he lectures upon them for effect, not for love. With the exception of a single character, that of Sir Orlando Friscobaldo, whom he recognised at first sight as one with whose qualities he had been long familiar, they did not touch him nearly; and, therefore, his comments upon them are comparatively meagre and turgid, and he gladly escapes from them into "wise saws and modern instances." The light of his own experience does not thicken about their scenes. His notices of Marlow, Heywood, Middleton, Marston, Deckar, Chapman, Webster, and Ford, do not let us half so far into the secret of these extraordinary writers as the notes which Mr. Lamb has scattered (stray gifts of beauty and wisdom) through the little volume of his "Specimens;" imbued with the very feeling which swelled and crimsoned in their intensest passages, and coming on the listening mind like strains of antique melody, breathed from the midst of that wild and solemn region in which their natural magic wrought its wonders. His regard for Beaumont and Fletcher is more hearty, and his appreciation of scattered excellencies in them as fine as can be wished; but he does not seem to apprehend the pervading spirit of their dramas, —the mere spirit of careless grace and fleeting beauty, which made the walk of tragedy a fairy land; turned passions and motives to its own sweet will; annihilated space and time; and sheds its rainbow hues with bountiful indifference on the just and the unjust; represented virtue as a happy accident, vice as a wayward fancy; and changed one for the other in the same person by sovereign caprice, as by a touch of Harlequin's wand, leaving "nothing serious in mortality," but reducing the struggle of life to an heroic game, to be played splendidly out, and left without a sigh. Nor does he pierce through the hard and knotty rind of Ben Jonson's manner, which alone, in our time, has been entirely penetrated by the author of the "Merchant of London," who, when a mere lad, grappled with this tough subject and mastered it;* and whose long and earnest aspiration after a kindred force and beauty with this and other idols of his serious boyhood, is not, even now, wholly unfulfilled!

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[*] Lectures on the Age of Elizabeth.—Lecture VI.

[†] Ibid.—Lecture III.

[*] This exquisite morsel of criticism (if that name be proper) first appeared in the "Morning Chronicle," as an introduction to the account of the first appearance of Miss Stephens in "Polly Peachum" (her second character)—an occasion worthy to be so celebrated—but not exciting any hope of such an article. What a surprise it was to read it for the first time, amidst the tempered patriotism and measured praise of Mr. Perry's columns! It was afterwards printed in the "Round Table," and (being justly a favourite of its author) found fit place in his "Lectures on the English Poets."—See Lecture VI.

Of Shakspeare's genius, Mr. Hazlitt has written largely and well; but there is more felicity in his incidental references to this great subject, than in those elaborate essays upon it, which fill the volume entitled "Characters of Shakspeare's Plays." In reading them we are fatigued by perpetual eulogy,—not because we deem it excessive, but because we observe in it a constant straining to express an admiration too vast for any style. There is so much suggested by the poet to each individual mind, which blends with, and colours its own most profound meditations and dearest feelings, without assuming a distinct form, that we resent the laborious efforts of another to body forth his own ideas of our common inheritance, unless they vindicate themselves by entire success, as intruding on the holy ground of our own thoughts. Mr. Lamb's brief glance at "Lear" is the only instance of a commentary on one of Shakspeare's four great tragedies which ever appeared to us entirely worthy of the original; and this, indeed, seems to prolong, and even to heighten, the feeling of the tremendous scenes to which it applies, and to make compensation for displacing our own dim and faint conceptions, long cherished as they were, by the huge image clearly reflected in another's mind. There is nothing approaching to this excellence in Mr. Hazlitt's account of "Lear," of "Hamlet," of "Othello," or of "Macbeth." He piles epithet on epithet in a vain attempt to reach "the height of his great argument:" or trifles with the subject, in despair of giving adequate expression to his own feelings respecting it. Nor is his essay on "Romeo and Juliet" more successful; for here, unable to find language which may breathe the sense of love and joy which the play awakens, he attacks Wordsworth's "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Early Childhood," because it refers the glory of our intellectual being to a season antecedent to the dawn of passion; as if there was any common standard for the most delicious of all plays of which love is the essence, and the noblest train of philosophic thought which ever "voluntary moved harmonious numbers;" as if each had not a truth of its own; or as if there was not room enough in the great world of poetry for both! When thus reduced by conscious inability to grasp the subject, into vague declamation, he was lost; but wherever he found "jutting freeze or cornice" to lodge the store of his own reflections, as in estimating the aristocratic pride of "Coriolanus," he was excellent; still better where he could mingle the remembrances of sportive childhood with the poet's fantasies, as in describing the "Midsummer Night's Dream;" and best of all when he could vindicate his own hatred of the sickly cant of mortality, and his sense of hearty and wise enjoyment, by precept and example such as "The Twelfth Night" gave him. In these instances, his own peculiar faculty, as a commentator on the writings of others,—that of enriching his criticism by congenial associations, and, at the same time infusing into it the spirit of his author, thus "stealing and giving odour"—had free scope, while the greatest tragedies remained beyond the reach of all earthly influence, too far withdrawn "in the highest heaven of invention," to be affected by any atmosphere of sentiment he might inhale himself, or shed around others.

The strong sense of pleasure, both intellectual and physical, naturally produced in Hazlitt a rooted attachment to the theatre, where the delights of the mind and the senses are blended; where the grandeur of the poet's conceptions is, in some degree, made palpable, and luxury is raised and refined by wit, sentiment, and fancy. His dramatic criticisms are more pregnant with fine thoughts on that bright epitome of human life than any others which ever were written; yet they are often more successful in making us forget their immediate subjects than in doing them justice. He began to write with a rich fund of theatrical recollections; and, except when Kean, or Miss Stephens, or Liston supplied new and decided impulses, he did little more than draw upon this old treasury. The theatre to him was redolent of the past; images of Siddons, of Kemble, of Bannister, of Jordan, thickened the air; imperfect recognitions of a hundred evenings, when mirth or sympathy had loosened the pressure at the heart, and set the springs of life in happier motion, thronged around him, and "more than echoes talked along the walls." He loved the theatre for these associations, and for the immediate pleasure which it gave to thousands about him, and the humanizing influences it shed among them, and attended it with constancy to the very last;* and to those personal feelings and universal sympathies he gave fit expression; but his habits of mind were unsuited to the ordinary duties of the critic. The players put him out. He could not, like Mr. Leigh Hunt, who gave theatrical criticism a place in modern literature, apply his graphic powers to a detail of a performance, and make it interesting by the delicacy of the touch; encrystal the cobweb intricacies of a plot with the sparkling dew of his own fancy—bid the light plume wave in the fluttering grace of his style—or "catch ere she fell the Cynthia of the minute," and fix the airy charm in lasting words. In criticism, thus just and picturesque, Mr. Hunt has never been approached; and the wonder is, that, instead of falling off with the art of acting, he even grew richer; for the articles of the "Tatler" equalling those of the "Examiner" in niceness of discrimination, are superior to them in depth and colouring. But Hazlitt required a more powerful impulse; he never wrote willingly, except on what was great in itself, or, forming a portion of his own past being, was great to him; and when both these felicities combined in the subject, he was best of all—as upon Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. Mr. Kean satisfied the first requisite only, but in the highest possible degree. His extraordinary vigour struck Hazlitt, who attended the theatre for the "Morning Chronicle," on the night of his *début*, in the very first scene, and who, from that night, became the most devoted and efficient of his supporters. Yet if, on principle, Hazlitt preferred Kean to Kemble, and sometimes drew parallels between them disparaging to the idol of his earlier affections, there is nothing half so fine in his eloquent eulogies on the first, as in his occasional recurrences to the last, when the stately form which had realized full many a boyish dream of Roman greatness "came back upon his heart again," and seemed to reproach him for his late preference of the passionate to the ideal. He criticised new plays with reluctant and indecisive hand, except when strong friendship supplied the place of old recollection, as in the instances of Barry Cornwall and Sheridan Knowles—the first of whom, not exhausting all the sweetness of his nature in scenes of fanciful tenderness and gentle sorrow, cheered him by unwearied kindness in hours of the greatest need—and the last, as kind and as true, had, even from a boy, been the object of his warmest esteem. He rejoiced to observe his true-hearted pupil manifesting a dramatic instinct akin to that of the old masters of passion—like them forgetting himself in his subject, and contented to see *fair play* between his persons—working all his interest out of the purest affections, which might beat indeed beneath the armour of old Rome, and beside its domestic hearths, but belong to all time—and finding an actor who, with taste and skill to preserve his unstudied grace, had heart enough to send his honest homely touches to the hearts of thousands. Would that Hazlitt had lived to witness the success of the "Hunchback"—not that it is better than the plays which he did see, but that he would have exulted to find the town surprised for once into justice, recognising the pathos and beauty which had been among them unappreciated so long, and paying part of that debt to the living author, which he feared they would leave for posterity to acknowledge in vain!

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* "Retrospective Review," vol. i. pp. 161—206.

* See his article entitled "The Free Admission," in the "New Monthly Magazine," vol. xxix. p. 93; one of his last, and one of his most characteristic effusions.

Mr. Hazlitt's criticisms on pictures are, as we have been informed by persons competent to judge, and believe, masterly. Of their justice we are unable to form an opinion for ourselves; but we know that they are instinct with earnest devotion to art, and rich with illustrations of its beauties. Accounts of paintings are too often either made up of technical terms, which convey no meaning to the uninitiated, or of florid description of the scenes represented, with scarce an allusion to the skill by which the painter has succeeded in emulating nature; but Hazlitt's early aspirations, and fond endeavours after excellence in the art, preserved him effectually from these errors. He regarded the subject with a perfect love. No gusty passion here ruffled the course of his thoughts: all his irritability was soothed, and all his disappointments forgotten, before the silent miracles of human genius; and his own vain attempts, fondly remembered instead of exciting envy of the success of others, heightened his sense of their merit, and his pleasure and pride in accumulating honours on their names. Mr. Hunt says of these essays, that they "throw a light on art as from a painted window,"—a sentence which, in its few words, characterizes them all, and leaves nothing to be wished or added.

In person, Mr. Hazlitt was of the middle size, with a handsome and eager countenance, worn by sickness and thought; and dark hair, which had curled stiffly over the temples, and was only of late years sprinkled with gray. His gait was slouching and awkward, and his dress neglected; but when he began to talk he could not be mistaken for a common man. In the company of persons with whom he was not familiar his bashfulness was painful: but when he became entirely at ease, and entered on a favourite topic, no one's conversation was ever more delightful. He did not talk for effect, to dazzle, or surprise, or annoy, but with the most simple and honest desire to make his view of the subject entirely apprehended by his hearer. There was sometimes an obvious struggle to do this to his own satisfaction: he seemed labouring to drag his thought to light from its deep lurking place; and, with modest distrust of that power of expression which he had found so late in life, he often betrayed a fear that he had failed to make himself understood, and recurred to the subject again and again, that he might be assured he had succeeded. In argument, he was candid and liberal: there was nothing about him pragmatical or exclusive; he never drove a principle to its utmost possible consequences, but like Locksley, "allowed for the wind." For some years previous to his death, he observed an entire abstinence from fermented liquors, which he had once quaffed with the proper relish he had for all the good things of this life, but which he courageously resigned when he found the indulgence perilous to his health and faculties. The cheerfulness with which he made this sacrifice always appeared to us one of the most amiable traits in his character. He had no censure for others, who for the same motives were less wise or less resolute; nor did he think he had earned, by his own constancy, any right to intrude advice which he knew, if wanted, must be unavailing. Nor did he profess to be a convert to the general system of abstinence which was advocated by one of his kindest and stanchest friends: he avowed that he yielded to necessity; and instead of avoiding the sight of that which he could no longer taste, he was seldom so happy as when he sat with friends at their wine, participating the sociality of the time, and renewing his own past enjoyment in that of his companions, without regret and without envy. Like Dr. Johnson, he made himself poor amends for the loss of wine by drinking tea, not so largely, indeed, as the hero of Boswell, but at least of equal potency—for he might have challenged Mrs. Thrale and all her sex to make stronger tea than his own. In society, as in politics, he was no flincher. He loved "to hear the chimes at midnight," without considering them as a summons to rise. At these seasons, when in his happiest mood, he used to dwell on the conversational powers of his friends, and live over again the delightful hours he had passed with them; repeat the pregnant puns that one had made; tell over again a story with which another had convulsed the room; or expand in the eloquence of a third: always best pleased when he could detect some talent which was unregarded by the world, and giving alike, to the celebrated and the unknown, due honour.

Mr. Hazlitt delivered three courses of Lectures at the Surrey Institution, to the matter of which we have repeatedly alluded—on *The English Poets*; on *The English Comic Writers*, and on *The Age of Elizabeth*—before audiences with whom he had but "an imperfect sympathy." They consisted chiefly of Dissenters, who agreed with him in his hatred of Lord Castlereagh, but who "loved no plays;" of Quakers, who approved him as the opponent of Slavery and Capital Punishment, but who "heard no music;" of citizens, devoted to the main chance, who had a hankering after "the improvement of the mind," but to whom his favourite doctrine of its natural disinterestedness was a riddle; of a few enemies who came to sneer; and a few friends, who were eager to learn and to admire. The comparative insensibility of the bulk of his audience to his finest passages, sometimes provoked him to awaken their attention by points which broke the train of his discourse, after which he could make himself amends by some abrupt paradox which might set their prejudices on edge, and make them fancy they were shocked. He startled many of them at the onset, by observing, that, since Jacob's Dream, "the heavens have gone farther off and become astronomical,"—a fine extravagance, which the ladies and gentlemen, who had grown astronomical themselves under the preceding lecturer, felt called on to resent as an attack on their severer studies. When he read a well-known extract from Cowper, comparing a poor cottager with Voltaire, and had pronounced the line "a truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew," they broke into a joyous shout of self-gratulation, that they were so much wiser than a wicked Frenchman! When he passed by Mrs. Hannah More with observing, that "she had written a great deal which he had never read," a voice gave expression to the general commiseration and surprise, by calling out "More pity for you!" They were confounded at his reading with more emphasis perhaps than discretion, Gay's epigrammatic lines on Sir Richard Blackstone, in which scriptural persons are freely hitched into rhyme; but he went doggedly on to the end, and, by his perseverance, baffled those who, if he had acknowledged himself wrong by stopping, would have hissed him without mercy. He once had an edifying advantage over them. He was enumerating the humanities which endeared Dr. Johnson to his mind, and at the close of an agreeable catalogue, mentioned, as last and noblest, "his carrying the poor victim of disease and dissipation on his back through Fleet-street,"—at which a titter arose from some, who were struck by the picture as ludicrous, and a murmur from others, who deemed the allusion unfit for ears polite. He paused for an instant, and then added in his sturdiest and most impressive manner, "an act which realizes the parable of the Good Samaritan," at which his moral and delicate hearers shrunk rebuked into deep silence. He was not eloquent in the true sense of the term; for his thoughts were too weighty to be moved along by the shallow stream of feeling which an evening's excitement can rouse. He wrote all his lectures, and read them as they were written: but his deep voice and earnest manner suited his matter well. He seemed to dig into his subject—and not in vain. In delivering his longer quotations, he had scarcely continuity enough for the versification of Shakspeare and Milton, "with linked sweetness long drawn out;" but he gave Pope's brilliant satire and divine compliments, which are usually complete within the couplet, with an elegance and point which the poet himself would have felt as their highest praise.

Mr. Hazlitt had little inclination to write about contemporary authors,—and still less to read them. He was with difficulty persuaded to look into the Scotch Novels! but when he did so, he found them old in substance though new in form, read them with as much avidity as the rest of the world, and expressed better than any one else what all the world felt about them. His hearty love of them, however, did not decrease, but aggravate, his dislike of the political opinions and practices of their author; and yet, the strength of his hatred towards that which was accidental and transitory, only set off the unabated power of his regard for the free and the lasting. Coleridge and Wordsworth were not moderns to him; for he knew them in his youth, which was his own antiquity, and the feelings which were the germ of their poetry had sunk deep into his heart. His personal acquaintance with them was broken before he became known to the world as an author, and he sometimes alluded to them with bitterness: but he, and he alone, has done justice to the immortal works of the one, and the genius of the other. The very prominence which he gave to them as objects of attack, at the time when it was the fashion to pour contempt on their names—when the public echoed those articles of the "Edinburgh Review" upon them, which they now regard with wonder as the curiosities of criticism, proved what they still were to him; and, in the midst of those attacks, there are involuntary confessions of their influence over his mind, are touches of admiration, heightened by fond regret, which speak more than his elaborate eulogies upon them in his "Spirit of the Age." With the exception of the works of these, and of two or three friends to whom we have alluded, he held modern literature in slight esteem; and he regarded the discoveries of science, and the visions of optimism, with an undazzled eye. His "large discourse of reason" looked not before, but after. He felt it his great duty, as a lover of genius and art, to defend the fame of the mighty dead. When the old painters were assailed in "The Catalogue Raisonnée of the British Institution," he was "touched with noble anger." All his own vain longings after the immortality of the works which were libelled,—the very tranquillity and beauty they had shed into his soul,—all his comprehension of the sympathy and delight of thousands, which, accumulating through long time, had attested their worth—were fused together to dazzle and to blast the poor caviller who would disturb the judgment of ages. So, when a popular poet assailed the fame of Rousseau—seeking to reverse the decision of posterity on what that great writer had done, by fancying the opinion of people of condition in his neighbourhood on what he seemed to their apprehensions while living with Madame de Warrens, he vindicated the prerogatives of genius with the true logic of passion. Few things irritated him more than the claims set up for the present generation to be wiser and better than those which have gone before it. He had no power of imagination to embrace the golden clouds which hung over the Future, but he rested and expatiated in the Past. To his apprehension human good did not appear a slender shoot of yesterday, like the bean-stalk in the fairy-tale, aspiring to the skies, and ending in an enchanted castle, but a huge growth of intertwisted fibres, grasping the earth by numberless roots, and bearing vestiges of "a thousand storms, a thousand thunders."

It would be beside our purpose to discuss the relative merits of Mr. Hazlitt's publications, to most of which we have alluded in passing; or to detail the scanty vicissitudes of a literary life. Still less do we feel bound to expose or to defend the personal frailties which fell to his portion. We have endeavoured to trace his intellectual character in the records he has left of himself in his works, as an excitement and a guide to their perusal by those who have yet to know them. The concern of mankind is with this alone. In the case of a profound thinker more than of any other, "that which men call evil"—the accident of his condition—is interred with him, while the good which he has achieved lies unmingled and entire. The events of Mr. Hazlitt's true life are not his engagement by the "Morning Chronicle," or his transfer of his services to the "Times," or his introduction to the "Edinburgh Review," or his contracts or quarrels with booksellers; but the progress and the development of his understanding as nurtured or swayed by his affections. "His warfare was within;" and its spoils are ours! His "thoughts which wandered through eternity" live with us, though the hand which traced them for our benefit is cold. His death, though at the age of only fifty-two, can hardly be deemed untimely. He lived to complete the laborious work in which he sought to embalm his idea of his chosen hero; to see the unhoped-for downfall of the legitimate throne which had been raised on the ruins of the empire; and to open, without exhausting, those stores which he had gathered in his youth. If the impress of his power is not left on the sympathies of a people, it has (all he wished) sunk into minds neither unreflecting nor ungrateful.

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES.

THE LATE DOWAGER LADY HOLLAND.

[MORNING CHRONICLE, Nov. 25, 1845.]

IT seems scarcely fitting that the grave should close over the remains of the late Dowager Lady Holland without some passing tribute beyond the paragraph which announces, with the ordinary expression of regret, the decease of a widow lady advanced in years, and reminds the world of fashion that the event has placed several noble families in mourning. That event, which a fortnight ago was regarded by friendly apprehensions as probably at the distance of some years, has not merely clouded and impaired the enjoyments of one large circle, but has extinguished for ever a spirit of social happiness which has animated many, and severed the most genial link of association, by which some of the finest minds which yet grace the literary and political world were connected with the mightiest of those which have left us. The charms of the celebrated hospitalities of Holland House, in the time of its late revered master, have been too gracefully developed, by one who has often partaken and enhanced them, in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1841, to allow a feebler expression; but death had not then bestowed the melancholy privilege of expatiating on the share of its mistress in crowding those memorable hours with various pleasure, or on the energetic kindness with which she strove, against the perpetual sense of unutterable loss, to renew some portion of their enjoyments. For the remarkable position she occupied, during many years of those daily festivals in which genius, wit, and patriotic hope were triumphant, she was eminently gifted. While her own remarks were full of fine practical sense, and nice observation, her influence was chiefly felt in the discourse of those whom she directed and inspired, and which, as she impelled it, startled by the most animated contrasts, or blended in the most graceful harmonies. Beyond any other hostess we ever knew—and very far beyond any host—she possessed the tact of perceiving and the power of evoking the various capacities which lurked in every part of the brilliant circles she drew around her. To enkindle the enthusiasm of an artist on the theme over which he had achieved the most facile mastery; to set loose the heart of the rustic poet, and imbue his speech with the freedom of his native hills; to draw from the adventurous traveller a breathing picture of his most imminent danger, or to embolden the bashful soldier to disclose his own share in the perils and glories of some famous battle-field; to encourage the generous praise of friendship, when the speaker and the subject reflected interest on each other, or win the secret history of some effort which had astonished the world or shed new lights on science;—to conduct those brilliant developments to the height of satisfaction, and then to shift the scene by the magic of a word, were among her daily successes. And if this extraordinary power over the elements of social enjoyment was sometimes wielded without the entire concealment of its despotism; if a decisive check sometimes rebuked a speaker who might intercept the variegated beauty of Jeffrey's indulgent criticism, or the jest announced and self-rewarded in Sydney Smith's delighted and delighting chuckle, the authority was too clearly exerted for the evening's prosperity, and too manifestly impelled by an urgent consciousness of the value of those golden hours which were fleeting within its confines, to sadden the enforced silence with more than a momentary regret. If ever her prohibition, clear, abrupt, and decisive, indicated more than a preferable regard for livelier discourse, it was when a depreciatory tone was adopted towards genius, or goodness, or honest endeavour, or when some friend, personal or intellectual, was mentioned in slighting phrase. Habituated to a generous partisanship by strong sympathy with a great political cause, she carried the fidelity of her devotion to that cause into her social relations, and was ever the truest and the fastest of friends. The tendency, often more idle than malicious, to soften down the intellectual claims of the absent, which so insidiously besets literary conversation, and teaches a superficial insincerity even to substantial esteem and regard, found no favour in her presence; and hence the conversations over which she presided, perhaps beyond all that ever flashed with a kindred splendour, were marked by that integrity of good nature which might admit of their exact repetition to every living individual whose merits were discussed, without the danger of inflicting pain. Under her auspices, not only all critical, but all personal talk was tinged with kindness; the strong interest which she took in the happiness of her friends shed a peculiar sunniness over the aspects of life presented by the common topics of alliances, and marriages, and promotions; and not a hopeful engagement, or a happy wedding, or a promotion of a friend's son, or a new intellectual triumph of any youth with whose name and history she was familiar, but became an event on which she expected and required congratulation, as on a part of her own fortune. Although there was naturally a preponderance in her society of the sentiment of popular progress, which once was cherished almost exclusively by the party to whom Lord Holland was united by sacred ties, no expression of triumph in success, no virulence in sudden disappointment, was ever permitted to wound the most sensitive ear of her conservative guests. It might be that some placid comparison of recent with former times spoke a sense of freedom's peaceful victory; or that, on the giddy edge of some great party struggle, the festivities of the evening might take a more serious cast, as news arrived from the scene of contest, and the pleasure be deepened with the peril; but the feeling was always restrained by the present evidence of permanent solaces for the mind, which no political changes could disturb. If to hail and welcome genius—or even talent which revered and imitated genius—was one of the greatest pleasures of Lord Holland's life, to search it out, and bring it within the sphere of his noble sympathy, was the delightful study of her's. How often, during the last half century, has the steep ascent of fame been brightened by the genial appreciation she bestowed, and the festal light she cast on its solitude! How often has the assurance of success received its crowning delight amid the genial luxury of her circle, where renown itself has been realized for the first time in all its sweetness! How large a share she communicated to the delights of Holland House will be understood by those who shared her kindness, first in South-street, and recently in Stanhope-street, where, after Lord Holland's death, she honoured his memory by cherishing his friends and following his example; where, to the last, with a voice retaining its girlish sweetness, she welcomed every guest, invited or casual, with the old cordiality and queenly grace; where authors of every age and school—from Rogers, her old and affectionate friend, whose first poem illuminated the darkness of the last closing century "like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear," down to the youngest disciple of the latest school—found that honour paid to literature which English aristocracy has too commonly denied it; and where, every day, almost to her last, added to her claim to be remembered as one who, during a long life, cultivated the great art of living happily, by the great means of making others happy.

ADDRESS

AT THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE MANCHESTER ATHENÆUM, Oct. 23, 1845.

[MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, OCT. 25, 1845.]

If there were not virtue in the objects and purposes, and power in the affections, which have called into life the splendid scene before me, capable of emboldening the apprehensive and strengthening the feeble, I should shrink at this moment from attempting to discharge the duties of the high office to which the kindness of your directors has raised me. When I remember that the first of this series of brilliant anniversaries, which is still only beginning, was illustrated by the presidency of my friend, Mr. Charles Dickens,—who brought to your cause not only the most earnest sympathy with the healthful enjoyments and steady advancement of his species, but the splendour of a fame as early matured and as deeply impressed on the hearts of his countrymen as that of any writer since the greatest of her intellectual eras: when I recollect that his place was filled last year by one whose genius, singularly diversified and vivid, has glanced with arrowy flame over various departments of literature and conditions of life, and who was associated with kindred spirits, eager to lavish the ardours of generous youth, on the noble labour of renewing old ties of brotherhood and attachment among all classes, ranks, and degrees of human family,—I feel that scarcely less than the inspiration which breathes upon us here, through every avenue of good you have opened, could justify the hope that the deficiencies of the chairman of this night may be forgotten in the interest and the majesty of his themes. Impressive as such an assembly as this would be in any place, and under any circumstances, it becomes solemn, almost awful, when the true significancy of its splendour is unveiled to the mind. If we consider that this festival of intellect is holden in the capital of a district containing, within comparatively narrow confines, a population scarcely less than two millions of immortal beings, engrossed in a proportion far beyond that of any other in the world, in the toils of manufacture and commerce; that it indicates at once an unprecedented desire on the part of those elder and wealthier labourers in this region of industry, to share with those whom they employ and protect, the blessings which equally sweeten the lot of all, and the resolution of the young to win and to diffuse them; that it exhibits literature, once the privilege only of a cloistered few, supplying the finest links of social union for this vast society, to be expanded by those numerous members of the middle class whom they are now embracing, and who yet comprise, as the poet says, "two-thirds of all the virtue that remains," throughout that greater mass which they are elevating, and of whose welfare they, in turn, will be the guardians,—we feel that this assembly represents objects which, though intensely local, are yet of universal concern, and cease to wonder at that familiar interest with which strangers at once regard them.

Personally till a few days ago a stranger to almost every member of your institution, or rather cluster of institutions, I find now to-day, in the little histories of your aims and achievements, which your reports present, an affinity, sudden indeed but lasting, with some of the best and happiest passages in a thousand earnest and laborious lives. I seem to take my place in your lecture room, an eager and docile listener, among young men whom daily duties preclude from a laborious course of studies, to be refreshed, invigorated, enlightened—sometimes nobly elevated, sometimes as nobly humbled, by the living lessons of philosophic wisdom—whether penetrating the earth or elucidating the heavens, or developing the more august wonders of the world which lies within our own natures, or informing the Present with the spirit of the Past;—happy to listen to such lessons from some gifted stranger, or well-known and esteemed professor, scattering the gems of knowledge and taste, to find root in opening minds;—but, better still, if the effort should be made by one of yourselves, by a fellow-townsman and fellow-student, emboldened and inspirited by the assurance of welcome to try some short excursion of modest fancy, or to illustrate some cherished theory by genial examples, and privileged to taste, in the heartiest applause of those who know him best and esteem him most, that which, after all, is the choicest ingredient in the pleasure of the widest fame. I mingle with your Essay and Discussion Class; share in the tumultuous but hopeful throbbings of some young debater; grow placid as his just self-reliance masters his fears; triumph in his crowning success; and understand, in his timid acceptance of your unenvying congratulations, at the close of his address, that most exquisite pleasure which attends the first assurance of ability to render palpable in language the products of lonely self-culture, and the consciousness that, as ideas which seemed obscure and doubtful while they lurked in the recesses of the mind, are, by the genial inspiration of the hour, shaped into form and kindled into life, they are attested by the understandings and welcomed by the affections of numbers. I seek your Library, yet indeed but in its infancy, but from whence information and refined enjoyment speed on quicker and more multitudinous wings than from some of the stateliest repositories of accumulated and cloistered learning, to vindicate that the right which the youngest apprentice lad possesses, not merely to claim, but to select for his own a portion in that inheritance which the mighty dead have left to mankind,—secured by the magic power of the press, against the decays of time and the shocks of fortune; or to exult in a communion with the spirit of that mighty literature which yet breathes on us fresh from the genius of the living; to feel that we live in a great and original age of literature, proud also in the consciousness that its spirit is not only to be felt as animating works elaborately constructed to endure, but as, with a noble prodigality, diffusing lofty sentiments, sparkling wit, exquisite grace, and suggestions even for serene contemplation through the most rapid effusions, weekly, monthly, daily given to the world; and, far beyond the literature of every previous age of the world, aiding the spirit of humanity, in appreciating the sufferings, the virtues, and the claims of the poor. And if I must confess, even when refreshed by the invigorating influences of this hour, that I can scarcely fancy myself virtuous enough to join one of your classes for the acquisition of science or language, or young enough to share in the exercises of your gymnasium, where good spirits and kind affections attend on the development of physical energy, there are yet some of your gay and graceful intermixtures of amusement to which I would gladly claim admission. I would welcome that delightful alternation of gentle excitement and thoughtful repose by which your musical entertainments tend to the harmony and proportion of life itself. I should rejoice to share in some of those Irish Evenings by which our friend Mr. Lover has suggested, in its happiest aspects, that land which is daily acquiring, I hope, that degree of affection and justice which it so strongly claims. I would appreciate with the heart, if not with the ear, the illustrations of Burns, by which some true Scottish melodist has made you familiar with that poet, and enabled you to forget labour and care, and walk with the inspired rustic "in glory and in joy" among his native hills; and with peculiar gratitude to your directors for enabling you to snatch from death and time some vestiges of departing grandeur in a genial art, which the soonest yields to their ravages;—I would hail with you the mightiest and the loveliest dramas of the world's poet, made palpable without the blandishments of decoration or scenery by the voice of the surviving artist of the Kemble name—in whose accents, softened, not subdued, by time, the elder of us may refresh great memories of classic grace, heroic daring, and softened grief, when he shared the scene with his brother and his sister; and those of us who cannot vaunt this privilege of age, may guess the greatness of the powers which thrilled their fathers in those efforts to which your cause—the cause of the youth of Manchester—breathing into the golden evening of life, a second spring, redolent with hope and joy, have lent a more than youthful inspiration. And while I am indulging in a participation of your pleasures, let me take leave to congratulate you on that gracious boon, which I am informed—(and I rejoice to hear it, as one of the best of all prizes and all omens in a young career)—your virtues have won for a large number of your fellow-workers—that precious Saturday's half-holiday—precious almost to man as to boy, when manhood, having borrowed the endearing name from childhood, seeks to enrich it with all that remains to it of childhood's delights—precious as a noble proof of the respect and sympathy of the employers for those whose industry they direct—and most precious of all in its results, if, being brightened and graced by such images as your association invokes on your leisure, it shall leave body and mind more fit for the work and service of earth and of heaven.

Thus regarding myself as a partaker, at least in thought and in spirit, of the various benefits of your association, I would venture to regard them less as the appliances by which a few may change their station in our external life, than as the means of adorning and ennobling that sphere of action in which the many must continue to move; which, without often enkindling an ambition to emulate the immortal productions of genius, may enable you the more keenly to enjoy, and the more gratefully to revere them; which, if they do not teach you the art of more rapidly accumulating worldly riches; and if they shall not—because they cannot—endow you with more munificent dispositions to dispense them than those which have made the generosity of Manchester proverbial throughout the Christian world, may ensure its happiest and safest direction in time to come, by encouraging those who may dispense it hereafter, to associate in youth, with the affection of brotherhood, for objects which suggest and breathe of nothing but what is wise, and good, and kind. It may be, indeed, that some master mind, one of those by which Providence, in all generations and various conditions of our species, has vindicated the Divinity which stirs within it, beyond the power of barbarism to stifle, or education to improve, or patronage to enslave, may start from your ranks into fame, under auspices peculiarly favourable for the safe direction of its strength; and, if such rare felicity should await you, with how generous a pride will you expatiate on the greatness which you had watched in its dawning, and with how pure a satisfaction will your sometime comrade, your then illustrious townsman, satiated with the applause of strangers, revert to those scenes where his genius found its earliest expression, and earned its most delightful praise. If another "marvellous boy," gifted like him of Bristol, should now arise in Manchester, his "sleepless soul" would not "perish in its pride;" his energies, neither scoffed at nor neglected, would not be suffered to harden through sullenness into despair; but his genius, fostered by timely kindness, and aided by your judicious counsel, would spring, in fitting season, from amidst the protecting cares of admiring friends, to its proper quarry, mindful, when soaring loftiest, of the associations and scenes among which it was cherished, "true to the kindred points of heaven and home." But it is not in the cultivation and encouragement of such rare intellectual prodigies, still less in the formation of a race of imitators of excellence, that I anticipate the best fruits of your peaceful victories. A season has arrived in the history of mankind, when talents, which in darker ages might justify the desire to quit the obscure and honourable labours of common life in quest of glittering distinction, can now only be employed with safety in adorning the sphere to which they are native; when of a multitude of competitors for public favour, few only can arrest attention; and when even of those who attain a flattering and merited popularity, the larger number must be content to regard the richest hues of their fancy and thought, but as streaks in the dawn of that jocund day which now "stands tiptoe on the misty mountain's top," and in the full light of which they will speedily be blended. But if it is almost "too late to be ambitious," except on some rare occasions, of the immortality which earth can bestow; yet for that true immortality of which Fame's longest duration is but the most vivid symbol; for that immortality which dawns now in the childhood of every man as freshly as in the morning of the world, and which breaks with as solemn a foreshadowing in the soul of the most ordinary faculties, as in that of the mightiest poet; for that immortality, the cultivation of wisdom and beauty is as momentous now as ever, although no eyes, but those which are unseen, may take note how they flourish. In the presence of that immortality, how vain appears all undue restlessness for a little or a great change in our outward earthly condition! How worse than idle all assumptions of superior dignity of one mode of honourable toil to another!—how worthless all differences of station, except so far as station may enable men to vindicate some everlasting principle, to exemplify some arduous duty, to grapple with some giant oppression, or to achieve the blessings of those who are ready to perish! How trivial, even as the pebbles and shells upon "this end and shoal of time," seem all those immunities which can only be spared by fortune, to be swept away by death, compared with those images and thoughts, which, being reflected from the eternal, not only through the clear meridian of holy writ, but, though more dimly, through all that is affecting in history, exquisite in art, suggestive in eloquence, profound in science, and divine in poetry, shall not only outlast all the chances and changes of this mortal life, but shall defy the chilness of the grave! Believe me, there is no path more open to the influences of heaven, than the common path of daily duty; on that path the lights from the various departments of your Athenæum will fall with the steadiest lustre; that path, so illumined, will be trodden in peace and joy, if not in glory; happy if it afford the opportunity, as it may to some of you, of clearly elucidating some great truth, which, being reflected from the polished mirrors of thousands of associated minds, sure of the opportunity of affording the means of perceiving and accepting, embracing and diffusing many glorious truths, which, when once fairly presented, although they may be surveyed in different aspects, and tinted with the hues of the various minds which receive them, may seem to have "a difference," will be found essentially the same to all, and will enrich the being of each and all.

There is one advantage which I may justly boast over both my predecessors in this office, —that of being privileged to announce to you a state of prosperity far more advanced and more confirmed than that which either could develop. The fairest prophecies which Mr. Dickens put forth, in the inspiration of the time, in the year 1843, have been amply fulfilled;—the eloquent exhortations of Mr. D'Israeli, in 1844, have been met by noble responses. From a state of depression, which, four or five years ago, had reduced the number of members nearly to 400, and steeped the institution in difficulty, it is now so elevated that, as to life members, you number 133 of those who have made the best of all possible investments, because the returns are sure and certain, and the rewards at once palpable and fair, which thus greet your life governors upon these happy anniversaries; you have of paying members no fewer than 2500—with an income of £4000 a year—with a debt annihilated, with the exception of that on mortgage, and with good hope even that this encumbrance may be soon swept away, and of informing the Courts of Bankruptcy, which I understand have taken shelter beneath your roof, that it will soon be time for them to look out for a more appropriate home. Before I entered this room, I confess I was inclined to wonder how these great effects had been achieved; I knew they had been principally accomplished by the great exertions, the sacrifices scarcely less than heroic, of some few members of your society, who had taken its interest deeply to heart; but now, when I see the scene before me, so graced and adorned as it is, I certainly need be surprised at no energies which have been put forth,—I can wonder at no results that have been attained. Those exertions, however, permit me to remind you, having been of extraordinary character, you can scarcely hope to be renewed. You must look for the welfare of this institution to its younger members. To them I speak when I say, "To you its destinies are confided; on you, if not its existence, yet its progress and its glory depend; for its happiest success will not arise mainly from emancipated revenues, or the admiring sympathy of strangers, or even from a scheme remarkably liberal and comprehensive, adapted to all, and embracing the feelings of all; nor yet in laws admirably framed, to preserve and support its proportion and order; but it is by the vigorous efforts of yourselves—perpetually renewing spirit and life in its forms—without which their very perfection will be dangerous, because, while presenting the fairest shows, they may, with less violence of apparent and startling transition, cease to be realities, and, instead of a great arena of intellectual exertion, may become only the abode of intellectual enjoyment and luxury—fair, admirable, graceful still; but the moving and elevating impulse of a vast population no more!—I know I wrong you in deprecating such a result as possible; a result I only imagine, to remind you that, as all momentous changes of the world have been produced by individual greatness, so all popular and free institutions can only be rendered and kept vital by individual energies—a result which nothing can even threaten but that most insidious form of indolence which is called modesty and self-distrust; a result against which not only the welfare of this great town, and of each stranger who comes to Manchester, and who may now hope to find beneath the shelter of your roof a great intellectual home, but also the exigencies of the time in which we live, plead with solemn voices!—They remind you that existence has become almost a different thing since it began with some of us. It then justified its old similitude of a journey; it quickened with intellect into a march; it is now whirling with science and speculation into a flight. Space is contracted and shrivelled up like a scroll; time disdains its old relations to distance; the intervals between the "flighty purpose" and the deed through which thought might lazily spread out its attenuated films, are almost annihilated; and the national mind must either glow with generous excitement, or waste in fitful fever. How important then is it, that throughout our land—but more especially here where all the greatest of the material instruments have their triumphant home—almost that of the alchemist—the spiritual agencies should be quickened into kindred activity; that the few minutes of leisure and repose which may be left us should, by the succession of those "thoughts which wander through eternity," become hours of that true time which is dialled in heaven; that to a mind winged for distant scenes, conversant with the society of the great of all ages, and warmed by sympathy to embrace the vast interests of its species, the few hours in which the space between London and Manchester is now traversed—nay the little hour in which it may soon be flashed over—shall have an intellectual duration equal to the old, legitimate, six days' journey of our fathers; while thought, no longer feebly circling in vapid dream, but impelled right onward with divine energy, shall not only outspeed the realized miracles of steam, but the divinest visions of atmospheric prophecy, and still keep "the start of the majestic world." Mr. Canning once boasted of his South American policy, that he had "called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old;" be it your nobler endeavour to preserve the balance even between the world within us and the world without us—not vainly seeking to retard the life of action, but to make it steady by contemplation's immortal freightage. In your course,—members of the Manchester Athenæum,—society at large may watch, and I believe will mark, the clear indications both of its progress and its safety. While the solitary leisure of the clerk, of the shopman, of the apprentice, of the overseer, as well as of the worker in all departments of labours, from the highest to the lowest, shall be gladdened, at will, by those companions to whom the "serene creators of immortal things," in verse and prose, have given him perpetual introduction, and who will never weary, or betray or forsake him;—while the voluntary toils of associated labour and study shall nourish among you friendships, not like the slight alliances of idle pleasure, to vanish with the hour they gladdened, but to endure through life with the products of the industry which fed them;—while in those high casuistries which your most ambitious discussions shall engender, the ardent reasoner shall recognise here the beatings of the soul against the bars of its clay tenement, and gather even from the mortal impediments that confound and baffle it, assurance that it is winged to soar into an ampler and diviner ether than invests his earthly heritage;—while the mind and heart of Manchester, turning the very alloy and dross of its condition to noble uses, even as its mechanists transmute the coarsest substances to flame and speed, shall expand beyond the busy confines of its manufactures and commerce to listen to the harmonies of the universe;—while, vindicating the power of the soul to be its own place, it shall draw within the narrow and dingy walls to which duty may confine the body, scenes touched with colours more fair and lovely than "ever were by sea or land," or tracè in each sullen mass of dense and hovering vapour,

> "A forked mountain, a blue promontory,
> With trees upon't that nod into the world,
> And mock our eyes with air;"

while it shall give the last and noblest proof of the superiority of spirit over matter by commanding, by its own naked force, as by an enchanter's wand, the presence of those shapes of beauty and power which have hitherto nurtured the imagination in the solitude and stillness of their realities;—while the glory of such institutions shall illumine the fiercest rapids of commercial life with those consecrating gleams which shall disclose in every small mirror of smooth water which its tumultuous eddies may circle, a steady reflection of some fair and peaceful image of earthly loveliness, or some glory of cloud or sky, preserving amidst the most passionate impulses of earth some traces of the serenity of heaven;—then may we exult as the chariot of humanity flies onward with safety in its speed,—for we shall discover, like Ezekiel of old, in prophetic vision, the spirit in its wheels!

There is yet one other aspect in which I would contemplate your association before I enter on the more delightful part of my duty—that in which success is certain—the soliciting for you the addresses of distinguished men, some of them attached to your welfare as well by local ties as by general sympathy, others gladly attending on your invitation, who feel your cause to be their cause, the cause of their generation and of the future. It is that in which its influences will be perceived, not merely banishing from this one night's eminence, raised above the level of common life, and devoted by knowledge to kindness, all sense of political differences, but softening, gracing, and ennobling the spirit of party itself as long as it must continue active. For although party's out-worn moulds have been shivered, and names which have flashed and thundered as the watchwords of unnumbered struggles for power are now fast waning into history, it is too much to hope, perhaps to desire, until the education of mankind shall more nearly approach its completion, that strong differences of opinion and feeling should cease to agitate the scenes on which freemen are called to discharge political duties. But the mind of the staunchest partisan, expanded by the knowledge and embellished by the graces which your Athenæum nurtures, will find its own chosen range of political associations dignified—the weapons of its warfare not blunted, but ornamented and embossed—and, instead of cherishing an ignorant attachment to a symbol, a name, or a ribbon, expressed in vulgar rage, infuriated by intemperance to madness, blindly violating the charities of life, and disturbing sometimes its holiest domestic affections—it shall grow calm in the assertion of principle, disdain the suggestions of expediency, even as those of corruption, and partake of the refinement which distance lends, while "with large discourse looking before and after," he expands his prospect to the dim horizon of human hopes, and seeks his incentives and examples in the tragic pictures of history. A politician thus instructed and ennobled, who adopts the course which most inclines to the conservation of establishments, will not support the objects of his devotion with a mere obstinate adherence, chiefly because they oppose barriers to the aims of his opponents, but will learn to revere in them the grandeur of their antiquity, the human affections they have sheltered and nurtured, the human experiences which mantle round them, and the inward spirit which has rendered them vital; while he who pants for important political changes will no longer anticipate, in the removal of those things which he honestly regards as obstacles to the advancement of his species, a mere dead level, or a vast expanse redeemed only from vacancy by the cold diagrams of theory, but will hail the dawning years as thronged by visions of peaceful happiness; and, as all great sentiments, like all great passions, however opposite may be their superficial aspects, have their secret affinities, so may these champions and representatives of conflicting parties, at the very height of the excitation produced by the energy of their struggle, break on a sense of kindred, if not of their creeds, at least of their memories and their hopes—embrace the past and the future in one glorious instant, conscious, at once, of those ancient anticipations with which the youth of the past was inspired, when the point we have attained was faintly discerned at the verge of its horizon by the intensest vision of its philosophy, and grasping and embracing the genial idea of the future as richest in the ever-accumulating past which time prepares for its treasure. Then shall they join in hailing, as now we hail from this neutral eminence, the gradual awakening of individual man of every class, colour, and clime, to a full consciousness of the loftiness of his origin, the majesty of his duties, the glories of his destiny. Then shall they rejoice with us in the assurance that, as he conquers the yet desert regions of the earth which was given him to be replenished and subdued, the same magic by which you are here enabled to let in on the densest population the air and feeling of mountain solitude, will, in turn, breathe through the opening wilderness the genial refinements of old society; that, as the forest yields to his stout heart and sturdy arm, the dominion of imagination and fancy will extend before him, their powers investing the glades he opens with poetic visions, shedding the purple light of love through thickets and groves till then unthreaded, and touching the extremest hills, when first disclosed to the human eye, with the old familiar hues of Christian hope and joy. Then, in the remotest conquests of civilization, shall new Athenæums arise, framed on your model—vocal with your language—inspired with your hopes—to echo back the congratulations which shall be wafted to them even from this place, on each succeeding anniversary, if not by yourselves, by your children and your children's children, and yet more remote descendants, and to bless the names of those who, amidst the toils, the cares, and the excitements of a season of transition and struggle, rescued the golden hours of the youth around them from debasing pleasures and more debasing sloth, and enabled them to set to the world, in a great crisis of its moral condition, this glorious example of intellectual courage and progress.*

LORD ELDON AND LORD STOWELL.

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THE remarkable success which has attended the publication of Mr. Twiss's Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon is a striking proof of the deep and enduring interest which attaches to the character it develops. More than six years had then elapsed since Lord Eldon's death, and many more since he ceased to dignify the highest seat of British Justice—or to influence, except by the weight of reputation and age, the discussions and the conflicts of the busy world. The principal incidents of his life were too well known to leave room for the gratification of curiosity—the political scenes in which he moved had passed from the arena of living things without having reached an historical distance—and yet the sale of these three massive volumes has exceeded that of any similar work within our recollection. This success has not, we think, been heightened by the courtly revelations and piquant anecdotes with which the work is diversified—some of which, indeed, so far impair its effect as to suggest the wish we expressed for their excision—but has arisen purely from the interest excited by a vigorous, honest, and affectionate delineation of the character and the fortunes of a great Englishman of sturdy nature, by a hand peculiarly fitted for its office. This remarkable career, thus depicted and thus appreciated, vividly suggests the remembrance of a kindred instance of industry, worth, and success—less prominently placed before the world, because less intimately associated with its contests and its changes, but not less crowned with emolument and honour, and hardly less fertile of instruction—that of Lord Eldon's elder brother, Lord Stowell; and if each life is worthy of separate contemplation, both are attended with additional interest when considered as springing from one source, and fostered in the same nurture. That two sons of a reputable tradesman in a provincial town at the extremity of England, devoting their powers to different branches of the same profession, should attain the highest honours which could be achieved in the course which each had chosen—and that each, after attaining an age far beyond that usually allotted to man, should leave, with a magnificent fortune, a name indestructibly associated with the department in which his work was performed—is a moral phenomenon not worthy only of national pride, but of respectful scrutiny. This similarity in the results of the labours of these two brothers is rendered more remarkable by the points of strong difference between their intellectual qualities and tastes, as developed in their mature years: inviting us to inquire what faculties were inherent in their youth; how far they were affected by early education; how far varied by the circumstances of their history.

The incidents of Lord Stowell's life, not supplying materials for voluminous biography, are laboriously collected and admirably detailed in an Essay in the "Law Magazine," apparently from the pen which, in a series of papers, seemed to have done enough for Lord Eldon's fame, until Mr. Twiss proved how much more might be achieved by happier opportunity and larger scope. Fortunately, however, the intellectual triumphs of the elder

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*TO SERJEANT TALFOURD,
On reading his Address to the Manchester Athenæum.
BY EDWARD KENEALY.

O'er the white urn that held the sacred heart
Of great Isocrates of old, was placed
The marble image of a Syren, graced
With all the loveliness of Grecian art;
Emblem of eloquence, whose music sweet
Won the whole world by its enchanting spells;
Oh, with what type shall we our Talfourd greet?
What Image shall pourtray the spirit that dwells
Within his soul? An angel from the skies
Beaming celestial beauty from his eyes—
The olden Syren sang but to deceive,
To lure mankind to death her voice was given;
But thine, dear Talfourd, thy bright words enweave
Immortal truths that guide to God and Heaven.

Scott were of a nature capable of preservation: as they will be found recorded entire in the Reports of his judicial decisions, of which Dr. Haggard's form the most interesting specimen, as they relate to a class of cases in which manners and affections are frequently involved, and were corrected by the judge himself with sedulous nicety. It is a subject of deep regret that his Lectures on History, which he delivered at Oxford from the Chair of the Camden Professorship, have hitherto been withheld from the world. Of these lectures Dr. Parr writes:—"To these discourses, which, when delivered before an academical audience, captivated the young and interested the old—which are argumentative without formality, and brilliant without gaudiness—and in which the happiest selection of topics was united with the most luminous arrangement of matter—it cannot be unsafe for me to pay the tribute of my praise, because every hearer was an admirer, and every admirer will be a witness." The writer of the article in the "Law Magazine" confirms a rumour we have elsewhere heard, that "a copy of those lectures, transcribed with all the care and accuracy which their noble author was accustomed to bestow on his labours, exists in manuscript;" and we cordially join in this hope "that no false delicacy will prevent their publication,"—as we feel assured that they will gratify a similar curiosity to that which Gibbon expressed, and justify even Dr. Parr's architectural praise. It would be interesting, for a different reason, to recover the Essay by which the younger Scott, when scarcely twenty-one years of age, obtained the prize of English Composition at Oxford—"On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Foreign Travel,"—a subject far removed from his experience, alien from his studies, and which, therefore, would seem to have owed its success either to the ingenuity of its suggestions, or the graces of its style. As, in after-life, the essayist was never distinguished for felicity of expression or fertility of illustration, and acquired a style not only destitute of ornament, but unwieldy and ponderous, this youthful success suggests the question—Whether, in devoting all his powers to the study of the law, he crushed the faculty of graceful composition with so violent an effort, that Nature, in revenge, made his ear dull to the music of language, and involved, though she did not darken his wisest words?

The school-day annals of the brothers disclose no trace of difference between them: unless the statement of their various recollections of the Sunday sermon—William gives a lucid detail of its substance, and John an exact detail of portions—may be so regarded: which may scarcely be, when it is recollected that if they were required to perform the exercise at the same time, there was a difference in their ages of six years. That interval—long as a section of school-boy life—implies, however, no variety in the system of their education: for Mr. Moises, the master of the ancient grammar-school of their native town, one of the best "of the old leven," admitted no innovations: the stern requisition—the unspared rod—the hearty commendation, which customary severities made more sweet—had the same influence at first as at last: no favour was shown to the youth of one generation more than to that of one degree over another; and the results seem to have been equally uniform—the insurance of that "holy habit of obedience," which is not only the most wholesome, but the happiest state of boyhood; and of a life-long affection to the veteran distributor of justice and praise, which the modern instructor—who, instead of the master, governing by old rules, is the instrument of new theories—can never hope to enjoy. Each of these celebrated pupils of Mr. Moises delighted in the opportunity which after-life afforded him of acknowledging his obligations to this excellent person; and each testified his gratitude in a manner appropriate to his position, and perhaps characteristic of his nature: Lord Eldon, by the substantial promotion of their schoolmaster, till the good old man declined all worldly favours, and then by transferring them to his son; and Lord Stowell, by contributing to his monument an inscription of graceful and just praise, expressed in Latin, which Dr. Parr might envy.

Among the lawyers who have emerged from that rank which the honest coal-fitter of Newcastle adorned, few have enjoyed, like his sons, the blessings of an education completed at one of our old English Universities. Many youths of such parentage, by means equally honourable to their own ambition and industry, have worked and cut their way through the impediments of fortune to forensic eminence—perhaps acquiring, from the difficulties with which they have struggled, nerve and courage for the painful controversies in which they aspired to mingle—and deriving from the varieties of "many-coloured life" with which they were personally conversant, "a learned spirit of human dealing," which they were able forcibly and happily to apply to the sudden exigencies of their professional career. But no such advantages can supply, however they may sometimes compensate for, the want of that protective influence, extended over opening manhood, which, superseding the restraints of school by a more generous and appropriate discipline, delays the fever and turmoil of life for a few of life's happiest years—which presents to yet unworldly ambition the achievements of praise and fame, before it is compelled to seek the lower rewards of fortune—which, amidst the flutterings of expectation and beneath the uncertain gleams of fancy, lays the deep and sure foundation of principle to be cemented in the mind amidst pliant affections—and which blends the veneration for ancient things with the aspirations of hope and the quickenings of joy. The youth who, quitting school, has been initiated at once into the perplexities of the law as practised in the most respectable attorney's office, or immersed amidst its more refined technicalities in the chambers of an eminent pleader, will acquire an earlier aptitude in some points of practical routine and *pigeon-hole* knowledge; but, unless gifted with some rare felicity of nature, will be less prepared for the systematic acquisition of legal learning, than he whose mind has been restrained and braced amidst academical studies. It is, indeed, of the greatest importance that he should look abroad upon humanity from a Seat of Learning, before he enters on a pursuit which will be to him either a science or a puzzle, as he is prepared to trace its details from its principles—or compelled to master them for immediate use, and to retain them by the painful and harassing process of unrefreshed and almost artificial memory.

Lord Eldon—who, although so much the younger of the brothers, was the first impelled to enter on the study of the law, by the pressure of need, consequent on an early and happy marriage—had not forestalled, by any direct preparation, the weight of professional labour; but he was eminently fitted by the constitution of his moral nature, and by the discipline with which it had been trained, for the arduous path he selected. It is delightful to contemplate him, in the pages of Mr. Twiss, as first settled in his dark and obscure abode in London, engaged in gigantic labours—excited only by the prospect of far-distant success, seen through a long avenue of toil, and cheered only by the unwearied affection of *her* for whose sake he had relinquished learned ease, and who watched through the hours of midnight study by his side. As he had been fortunate above most youths of his rank in life in the achievement of University associations, so he was favoured in the constancy, or perhaps in the inaptitude, which withheld him from seeking those aids to his scanty resources which many honourable aspirants to professional honours have sought and found in literary exertions. Without meaning disparagement to those who have availed themselves of such assistance, and, unseduced by the premature gratifications of authorship, have won the rewards of graver toil, we may regard it as a happiness to an incipient lawyer to be able and willing to hold his course without them. It too often happens that the immediate gifts of early praise fascinate and dazzle the mind so as to indispose it for patient labour; that the pleasure of imbodying the cherished thoughts of boyhood, and recognising the sympathy of many with them, prompts to their imperfect development; and that the feelings which should spread freshly through the whole course of life become outworn and faded in the process of rendering them intelligible to the world, and confused to the writer himself by their pale reflection in the quivering mirror of the public mind. No such mental dissipation weakened the intellectual frame of either of the brothers. Even Lord Stowell, whose occupations and tastes, pursued and enjoyed and cherished at Oxford, presented the temptation to seek literary fame, which the success of his lectures heightened—even he thought it better to "bide his time;" resisted all importunities to seek reputation beyond the University he adorned and charmed; and preserved undeveloped his variety of knowledge and exquisite felicity of expression, until they were felt exalting and refining the happiest efforts of his advocacy, and shedding new lustre on judicial wisdom.

Lord Eldon, and his great opponent in the State Trials of 1794, Lord Erskine, entered on the profession which, with far differing powers and in various courses, each exalted, under personal circumstances strikingly similar—each having the favourite qualifications of Lord Thurlow—a wife, and no hope of fortune but in his own exertions and success. To them that profession presented aspects as dissimilar as their capacities and their dispositions,—on each of which we will glance for a moment, before accompanying Lord Eldon to his choice, his career, and his reward.

There is no section of this world's hopes and struggles which is replete with so much animation of contest and such frequent recurrence of triumphant result, as the practice of the Common Law Bar before juries, as it was exulted in by Erskine—graced by Scarlett—variegated by Brougham—and elucidated by Lyndhurst. The grotesque and passionate forms of many-coloured life with which the advocate becomes familiar; the truths stranger than fiction, of which he is the depositary, and which, implicitly believing, he sometimes thinks too improbable to offer to the belief of others; the multitude of human affections and fortunes of which he becomes, in turn, not only the representative, but the sharer, passioned for the hour, even as those who have the deepest stake in the issue;—render his professional life almost like a dazzling chimera, a waking dream. For let it not be supposed, that because he is compelled, by the laws of retainer, to adopt any cause which may be offered to him in the regular course of his practice—with some extreme exceptions—that, therefore, he is often the conscious advocate of wrong. To him are presented those aspects of the case which it wears to the party who seeks his aid, and who, therefore, scarcely appears to him as stripped of claim to an honest sympathy. Is the rule of law, too, probably against him:—there are reasons, which cannot be exhibited to the court, but which are the counsel's "in private," why, in this instance, to relax or evade it will be to attain substantial justice. Does the client, on the other hand, require of his advocate that he should insist on the "rigour of the game,"—he only desires to succeed by a course apparently so odious, because technicality will, for once, repair some secret injury, and make even the odds of fortune. Is he guilty of some high crime,—he has his own palliations—his prosecutor seeks his conviction by means which it is virtue to repel,—or some great principle will be asserted by his acquittal. In all cases of directly opposing testimony, the counsel is necessarily predisposed to believe the statements which have first occupied his mind, and to listen to those which would displace his impression with incredulity, if not with anger. And how many cases arise in which there is no absolute right or wrong, truth or falsehood—cases dependent on *user*; on consent; on *waiver*; on mental competency,—and in which the ultimate question arises less from disputed facts, than from the arguments to be deduced from them;—and all these perplexed, distorted, or irradiated by the lights cast on them from the passions and the hopes of the client, to be refracted through the mind and coloured by the fancy of the counsel! In the majority of his causes he becomes, therefore, always a zealous, often a passionate partisan; lives in the life of every cause (often the most momentous part of his client's life)—"burns with one love, with one resentment glows,"—and never ceases to hope, to struggle, or to complain,—till the next cause is called on, and he is involved in a new world of circumstances, passions, and affections. Sometimes it will be his province to track the subtle windings of fraud, pursuing its dark unwearied course beneath the tramplings of busy life; to develop, in lucid array, a little history or cluster of histories, tending to one great disclosure; to combine fragments of scattered truths into a vivid picture; or to cast the light from numerous facts on secret guilt, and render it almost as palpable to belief as if disclosed to vision. At another time, the honour or the life of man may tremble in his hands;—he may be the last prop of sinking hope to the guilty or the sole refuge clasped by the innocent; or, called on to defend the subject against the power of state prosecution, may give to the very forms and quibbles with which ancient liberty was fenced, a dignity, and breathe over them a magic power. Sometimes it will be his privilege to pierce the darkness of time, guided by mouldering charters and heroic names; or, tracing out the fibres of old relationships, to explore dim monuments and forgotten tombs, retracing with anxious gaze those paths of common life which have been so lightly trodden as to retain faint impress of the passenger. One day he may touch the heart with sympathy for "the pangs of despised love," or glow indignantly at the violation of friendship, and ask, for wrongs beyond all appreciation, as much money as the pleader's imagination has dared to claim as damages; the next he may implore commiseration for human frailty, and preach nothing but charity and forgiveness. The sentiment of antiquity—the dawnings of hope—the sanctity of the human heart in its strength and its weaknesses, are among the subjects presented in rapid succession to his grasp;—with the opportunity sometimes, in moments of excitement, when his audience are raised by the solemnity of the occasion above the level of their daily thoughts, to give hints of beauty and grace which may gleam for a moment only, but will never be forgotten by his delighted hearers. In this sphere, Erskine moved triumphant;—lending his pliant sensibility to every modification of human feeling he touched on—gay, grave, pitying, humourous, pathetic, by turns—casting all himself into every subject, and forgetting himself within it, and shedding on the world of Nisi Prius hues of living beauty, which seemed to glance and tremble over it. Mr. Scott touched on the verge of his sphere in his circuits; but though an earnestness which all clients admire, a humour not too refined for the most vulgar apprehension, and a temper always under control, procured for him some business at the Assizes in days when competitors were few, he soon found that this was not the scene on which he could fulfil the prophecies which great judges had pronounced on the outset of his career.

But there is another branch, or rather associated branches of this great profession, requiring powers and habits of thought and feeling different, perhaps opposite, to those which should endow the advocate who would be the charmer of the hearts of juries. To study the law as a science; to trace its principles upwards to their source in the early yet ripe wisdom of our English annals, and thence to follow it through the thousand ramifications which extending wealth and population have rendered needful; and thus to acquire that knowledge which may enable its possessor to solve with confidence the most intricate questions, and to present the aspect of each which he is retained to sustain, encrusted with learning, but lucid in outline and clear in result,—is an employment laborious and silent indeed, but not unhappy in its progress nor doubtful in its reward. To succeed in this course, a clear and sound understanding, a retentive and not fastidious memory, an untiring industry, either finding or creating a love of its work, are all that is required; but how rare are these qualities, compared to the lower degrees of those which are deemed loftier—or how rarely do they withstand the temptations of pleasure or the more dangerous seductions of the listlessness and dreamy inaction which are the besetting sins of studious life! The student who is brave enough to embrace such a course with heroic devotion, has objects strongly defined before him in the horizon of his mind; for him hour is linked to hour, and day to day, by the continuous effort to approach them; and his life, instead of being dissipated among various pursuits, and fretted by doubts and vanities, is massed by the coherence of its habits into one consistent whole, and acquires a dignified harmony. By toiling thus in an artificial world, the great lawyer not rarely preserves to old age the simplicity and the freshness of childhood,—moving about as unconscious of the fever of life as a shepherd whose experience is bounded by his native mountains.

When Lord Eldon entered on his studies, the English law formed a body of old principles and modern instances, far better adapted to animate and reward such a career than its present condition. Although even then greatly increased in bulk since the palmy days of its first expositors, it was not, as now, perplexed by multitudes of statutes, expressed in the barbarous jargon peculiar to modern legislation, oppressing the understanding and "darkening counsel with words without knowledge;" nor bound up or frittered away by new rules, fashioned more on imagined expediency than on principle, and presenting an array of voluminous discords which may well strike a student with dismay, and induce him, in despair of acquiring a mastery over the whole, to rest contented with such knowledge of indexes, "small pricks to their subsequent volumes," as may enable him to find some authority to quote, or some expedient to grasp, on the exigency of each occasion. The system of law, however applicable to the enjoyment, the descent, and the transfer of real property, though despoiled of some of its forms of ancient dignity, and debased by limitations of time, which, however generally convenient, sometimes protect the grossest injustice—making kindness work a sort of disseisin, and arming ingratitude with power—is even still an extraordinary scheme of ingenious architecture, reducing the vestiges of feudal barbarism to consistent form, and extracting from the usages of violence and tyranny the securities of social rights. The system of equity too, not a capricious relaxation of the strict rules of law, but having a sisterly entireness of its own, little disturbed as yet by the busy hand of tumultuous legislation, retains a kindred if not an equal claim for a mind braced for laborious study. To the perfect mastery of these systems, with the more miscellaneous complexities of commercial law, Lord Eldon on quitting Oxford devoted his powers, admirably fitted for the work by all they included, and scarcely less by all they wanted; and the consequence was slow, gradual, and complete success in his profession—secured before he added to his toils the anxieties of political life—and calmly and steadily grasped as his first object amidst them.

The great element of Lord Eldon's success, both in legal and political life, was the remarkable simplicity which characterized his moral nature, his intellect, his opinions, and his purposes. Even his prodigious industry, which seemed to rejoice in the accumulation of toils on those which would stupify men who are accounted laborious, was a subordinate power to this singleness of being and aim. If he ever cherished tastes which might dazzle or distract him in his stubborn career, he soon crushed them beneath the weight of his studies. Once, indeed, when a young member of the House of Commons, he attempted an elaborate speech on the third reading of the India Bill, garnished with Shakspearian quotations violently applied, and scraps of Latin and texts of Scripture let into the mosaic-work of his composition, with strange contrast of colour—having resolved, with characteristic boldness, to rival Sheridan; but the House listened with astonishment to the wilful extravagance of the hard-headed lawyer; and he never repeated the error. Encouraged by the intellectual successes which his industry won in more congenial studies, he thought perhaps that he had only to apply the same labour to the department of wit and eloquence, in order to obtain a similar victory—as an eminent special pleader whom we had the happiness to know, rejoicing in the ease with which he produced works of extraordinary practical merit by distributing the labour of filling up his own masterly outlines among his pupils, once gravely proposed to manufacture novels and plays by a similar process. After this failure—which does not seem to have impaired his character with the House for sterling sense and comprehensive legal knowledge—he resolutely abstained from all attempts to adorn his natural plainness of speaking, or to relieve his toil by a single distracting pleasure. Mr. Twiss's just remark—"that in the station he was eventually called to fill, his want of imagination was one of his advantages; for the judgment, the highest of the intellectual powers, and in public affairs worth all the rest, was thus left to exercise undivided and undisturbed its empire in his mind and its influence in the counsels of his sovereign," is equally applicable to the early triumphs of his professional career. His powers were all massed together, and moved by a single impulse, and did not jostle or interfere with each other's influence. In every suit in which he was counsel at the bar, in every struggle of political controversy, or in the tenor of his private life, he saw his object clearly before him; and toiled upward to realize it with undivided strength by the straightest, though often the most arduous paths—some joke, innocent of wit or fancy alone relieving its patient sternness.

Thus constituted by nature of masculine understanding—beyond the common order rather in its grasp than in its essence—destined 'to move altogether when it moved at all,' Lord Eldon was fortunate in a kindred simplicity of religious and political creed. The effect of his early lessons in the old-fashioned school at Newcastle was to implant in a strong and simple mind a sense of the reality of religious truths, as imbodied in the formularies of the Church of England, which admitted of no more question than if it was the object of corporal vision. In his defence, therefore, of that which was part of his own being, he felt no scruple; no airy speculations disturbed the repose of his settled thought; to protect the Church against Romanism on the one side, and Dissent on the other—regardless of the expediencies of the times, or deriving new strength of opposition from them—became to him through life a natural if not an easy office. He at least "knew his course." In like manner, his attachment to the order of things in the State, as he found it, was scarcely less hearted—with him it was not a matter of reasoning, but of fact, so distinctly perceived, that he regarded the brilliant defence of the institutions he loved by the eloquence and wit of Canning with uneasiness, as if unquestionable truths were lowered in dignity by being protected by the dazzling fence of genius. When, therefore, his tendency to doubt and hesitate in the decision of those complicated questions of fact and equity which depended for adjudication on his individual view of their bearings, is invidiously contrasted with his prompt resistance to all extensive innovations, it should be recollected that his attachment to the institutions of England, as he first knew them, was one of the laws of his moral and intellectual nature;—it might be narrow, bigoted, inconvenient; incapable of gracefully bending to the necessities of the times; but still it was part of his true self: an attack on Church and State was to him the same thing as a violation of his paternal roof or an insult to a domestic affection. The same simplicity of nature, wiser than the most cunning policy, rendered him a greater, or rather a dearer favourite in the closet of the Sovereign than many who have striven to maintain an ascendency by the appliances of servility or the arts of flattery. In George III. he found a master with a nature congenial to his own; and devoted himself with his whole heart to him, in the true spirit of Shakspeare's servant "of the antique world." The qualities in his Royal Master which, beyond his station, attracted and justified this strong attachment, have never been so fairly developed as in the disclosures made and verified by Mr. Twiss, who shows the King as sustained in maintaining his resistance to revolutionary associations and movements, not merely by a regal obstinacy and undaunted courage, but by a depth of sentiment and earnest belief in principles, to which even those who have been most disposed to admire the resolution and to bless the issue have not always done justice. His Chancellor's conduct towards him, amidst those oscillations of reason which made him feel the need of a true friend, well requited his affection. Lord Eldon, by personal interviews with the King, became convinced that he was competent to discharge the functions of royalty; and, therefore, instead of encouraging measures which might induce the malady they assumed, he took on himself the responsibility of treating him as competent, when his own wavering might have been destructive. Surely there is no inconsistency between a sudden decision in such a case of feeling and conduct, and long hesitation on the result of a mass of facts, or of nice legal analogies, determining the earthly fate of a family, and affording a precedent for the administration of justice in similar cases for future times!

Although Lord Eldon strenuously resisted all important changes in the law, he was earnestly devoted to its liberal administration, without regard to persons or consequences. "The quality" of justice was with him as little "strained" as that of mercy. In deciding on the charges to be preferred against the parties accused of treason for their share in the English combination of 1794, he manifested a nobleness of determination, beyond the suggestions of expediency, as, in the conduct of the prosecutions, he maintained a courtesy of demeanor which won the respect of his most ardent opponents. He believed the offence to be treason; and although a conviction for that crime was more than doubtful, while a conviction for seditious conspiracy might have been regarded as almost certain, he rejected the safer and the baser course, and acted on the severe judgment of his reason. The analysis of these trials by Mr. Twiss—one of the most masterly and striking passages of his work—while it may leave the prudence of the Attorney-General open to question, must satisfy every impartial mind of the elevation of the motive by which he was impelled. While he dreaded any relaxation of the criminal law—as if all its old "terrors to evil-doers" would vanish in air if its most awful penalty were removed from crimes against which it had long been threatened—he endured the most anxious labour to prevent its falling on an innocent sufferer, or one who, however guilty, was not subjected to its infliction by the plainest construction of law. Mr. Peel, when Secretary for the Home Department, in one of the debates on the imputed delays of the Lord Chancellor's Court, thus bore testimony to this exemplary caution in sanctioning the infliction of capital punishment:—

"It had fallen," he said, "to his lot to send to the Lord Chancellor at the rising of his court, to inform him that on the ensuing morning his majesty would receive the recorder's report, containing probably forty or fifty cases. On proceeding from his Court of Chancery, the noble and learned Lord would, as was his uniform practice on such occasions, apply himself to the reading of every individual case, and abstract notes from all of them; and he had known more than one instance in which he had commenced this labour in the evening, and had been found pursuing it at the rising of the next sun. Thus, after having spent several hours in the Court of Chancery, he often employed twelve or fourteen more in the consideration of cases which involved the life or death of unhappy culprits."

One remarkable instance, in which his doubts—more valuable often than the certainties of ordinary minds—stood between a convict and death, notwithstanding the unfavourable opinion of a majority of the judges, may here be selected from a long catalogue. Mr. Aslett, after many years' service as second cashier of the Bank of England under Mr. Abraham Newland, was tempted to supply the deficiency of large speculations in stock by misappropriating an immense amount of the Exchequer bills which the bank held, and which were committed to his care. On detection, he was indicted for the capital felony of embezzling Exchequer bills, the property of the Bank of England: but when his fate seemed sealed beyond the reach of hope, it was discovered that the auditor, whose signature was necessary, by statute, to authenticate Exchequer bills, had not been regularly appointed to his office; and though an act of Parliament was passed to render the documents he had signed valid as between the government and the holders, that retrospective authentication did not justify the description of the embezzled papers in the proceedings against the prisoner as *Exchequer bills*. On this objection, Mr. Aslett was acquitted, but was detained to meet the charge in another form—that of misapplying "effects and securities" of the bank—on which he was convicted, and upon which a majority of the twelve judges held him amenable to the extreme sentence of the law. The Lord Chancellor's mind, however, was not satisfied that these irregular documents could, in a case of life, be strictly holden even to justify this more general description: Mr. Aslett therefore escaped death; and after suffering many years' imprisonment in the State apartments of Newgate, with this sentence hanging over him, but not unsolaced by social and even festive reliefs, was pardoned on condition of quitting his country for ever.

In the comprehensiveness and accuracy of his legal knowledge, Lord Eldon was perhaps the greatest of all English lawyers—certainly exceeded by no one of any age. If it is remembered how greatly, even in his time, the mass of statutes and decisions had expanded from the days of Lord Coke—how the provinces of common law and equity had assumed a systematic distinctness—and how easy of application his knowledge was to each of them in turn, and also to every branch of Scottish law which arose before him on appeal—it will be scarcely possible adequately to conceive the aptitude for study and the power of continuous labour which he must have exercised in the few years which elapsed before his time was engrossed by an enormous practice, which must have rendered systematic study impossible. After years spent in the Court of Chancery—exclusively engaged in equity, with the exception of the superficial varieties of his circuits, and the arduous duties of his great offices in state prosecutions—he assumed the functions of Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas with as much ease, and performed them with as perfect a mastery over all subjects, as though his life had been spent in the practice of the common law; and indeed manifested a promptitude and vigour, which he was so often accused of wanting when called upon solely and almost finally to decide on the fortunes of suitors in the Court of Chancery. One passing allusion to his having just come from a court of equity, by way of apology for quoting a decision in that court, is the only circumstance throughout his judgments, reported by Bosanquet and Puller in the second volume of their reports, which could lead to the suspicion that he had ever practised on the other side of Westminster Hall. In subtlety of apprehension, indeed, he is exceeded by Littledale; in ingenious application of legal analogies, by Holroyd; in lucid purity of expression, by Lord Chief Justice Tindal and Lord Lyndhurst; but in extent of knowledge and the facility of its application, he is exceeded by no judge of whom we have either experience or memorial. It is true that his style is heavy and involved—that the principles of law and the circumstances of fact are sometimes blended in his judgments so as to appear confused—but the matter is always there which not only justifies the particular decision, but supplies the rule for time to come. So far was he from shrinking from the development of principle, that in the only case which, while he was Chief Justice, was sent from the Court of Chancery for the opinion of the Court of Common Pleas,* he deviated from the usual practice of merely certifying the opinion of the Court to the Chancellor, and delivered a long exposition of the principles involved in the question—what words in a devise will pass leaseholds—discussing all the numerous authorities, and reconciling them to each other and to an intelligible rule. In this case, with a noble zeal for the fame of a deceased lawyer, he manifests that vigour of mind which was never perplexed except by the fear of doing injustice. Referring to some reported expressions of Lord Northington, impeaching without overruling the old case of "Rose v. Bartlett," he refused to believe that they had been used.

"We all know," said he, "that Lord Northington was possessed of great law-learning and a very manly mind; and I cannot but think that he would rather have denied the rule altogether than have set it afloat by treating it with a degree of scorn, and by introducing distinctions calculated to disturb the judgments of his predecessors and remove the landmarks of the law."

As Lord Eldon spoke of Lord Northington, so would he be spoken of himself. He too had a "manly mind"—firm in principle, apprehensive and slow in its application—deliberating sometimes to the injury of individuals, but maintaining the majesty of justice by the fear of precipitate decision—and (notwithstanding the complaints annually made of him in the House of Commons because he pondered long before he pronounced judgments which would decide the destiny of a suitor, and did not achieve impossibilities) over-mastering a world of labour which almost makes the mind dizzy in its contemplation. Nothing, indeed, could have enabled him to endure such labour but his undoubting faith in the great principles of his life—that kindness of nature which charms away animosities by its unaffected courtesy—and which, amidst the distractions of party, and the "fears of change perplexing nations," enabled him to preserve an exalted position in the minds of friends and opponents—

> "An ever-fixed mark,
> Which look'd on tempests and was never shaken."

With a gentler devotion to legal studies, but with accomplishments felicitously harmonizing with them, Lord Stowell nearly kept pace, step by step, with the promotion of his younger brother. His residence at Oxford for eighteen years—a period of collegiate seclusion unexampled in the life of a successful lawyer—prepared him to look on the varieties of human life and character which passed before him during the ensuing half century of professional labour, through a softening medium. Selecting for the scene of his practice the cloistered courts in Doctors' Commons, he avoided both the dazzling hurry of *Nisi Prius* advocacy, and those tremendous labours of the equity student which are scarcely enlivened by the arguments of the open Court of Chancery. But although the scene of his exertions was quiet and sequestered, his competitors few, and the discussions conducted with a sort of academical amenity, the subjects which, as advocate and as judge, he examined and adorned, spread widely throughout society: on the one hand, extending through the gravest considerations of international law to the horizon of the civilized world; and on the other, affecting those domestic relations in which delicate subtleties of passion and temper influence the most important of human rights and duties, and, above all the changes of fortune, tend to make life wretched or happy. In the dingy recesses of Doctors' Commons, the hopes and fears, the frailties, the passions, the loves, the charities of many lives were discerned in ever-shifting variety—as in a *camera obscura*—and never were they refined by such elegance as when touched by Lord Stowell. Of his efforts during his period of advocacy, when his evenings were enjoyed in the brilliant society of which Dr. Johnson was the centre, the world knows little; but his judgments during the years when he presided over the High Court of Admiralty and the Consistory Court, exhibiting all the aspects of each case, enable us to guess at the dexterity with which he presented the favourable views of the causes committed to his charge, and the beauty with which he graced them.

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* Thompson v. Lady Lawley, 2 Bos. and Pul. 303.

Of Lord Stowell's decisions the following character is given by Mr. Twiss in language worthy of the subject:—

"Lord Stowell had the good fortune to live in an age of which the events and circumstances were peculiarly qualified to exercise and exhibit the high faculties of his mind. The greatest maritime questions which had ever presented themselves for adjudication—questions involving all the most important points both in the rights of belligerents and in those of neutrals—arose in his time out of that great war in which England became the sole occupant of the sea, and held at her girdle the keys of all the harbours upon the globe. Of these questions, most of them of first impression, a large portion could be determined only by a long and cautious process of reference to principle and induction from analogy. The genius of Lord Stowell, at once profound and expansive, vigorous and acute, impartial and decisive, penetrated, marshalled, and mastered all the difficulties of these complex inquiries; till, having "sounded all their depths and shoals," he framed and laid down that great comprehensive chart of maritime law which has become the rule of his successors and the admiration of the world. What he thus achieved in the wide field of international jurisprudence, he accomplished also with equal success in the narrower spheres of ecclesiastical, matrimonial, and testamentary law. And though, where so many higher excellencies stand forth, that of style may seem comparatively immaterial, it is impossible not to notice that scholar-like finish of his judicial compositions, by which they delight the taste of the critic, as by their learning and their logic they satisfy the understanding of the lawyer."—*Life of Lord Eldon*, vol. iii. pp. 255–6.

The perspicuity of Lord Stowell's judgments in the Admiralty Court obtained for them not only the respect, but the reluctant accordance of the foreign powers who were most interested in impugning them. Having sent a copy of some of them, privately printed, to the Admiralty Judge of the United States, he received the following remarkable answer:—

"In the excitement caused by the hostilities raging between our countries, I frequently impugned your judgments, and considered them as severe and partial; but, on a calm review of your decisions, after a lapse of years, I am bound to confess my entire conviction both of their accuracy and equity. I have taken care that they shall form the basis of the maritime law of the United States, and I have no hesitation in saying, that they ought to do so in every country of the civilized world."

But the more popular judicial essays of Lord Stowell—for so his judgments may be not improperly regarded—are those pronounced in the Consistory Court in questions of divorce, restitution of conjugal rights, and nullity of marriage. Partaking more of the tone of a mediator than a censor, they are models of practical wisdom for domestic use. The judgment in the case of Evans *v.* Evans—a suit, by a lady, for divorce by reason of cruelty—presents a beautiful example of his enunciation of wise and just principles, of his skill in extracting from the exaggerations of passion and interest the essential truth, and of the amenity and grace with which he could soften his refusal to comply with a lady's prayer.* Thus he lays down the rule which should govern such unfortunate appeals:—

"The humanity of the court has been loudly and repeatedly invoked. Humanity is the second virtue of courts, but undoubtedly the first is justice. If it were a question of humanity simply, and of humanity which confined its views merely to the happiness of the present parties, it would be a question easily decided upon first impressions. Everybody must feel a wish to sever those who wish to live separate from each other, who cannot live together with any degree of harmony, and consequently with any degree of happiness; but my situation does not allow me to indulge the feelings, much less the *first* feelings of an individual. The law has said that married persons shall not be *legally* separated upon the mere disinclination of one or both to cohabit together. The disinclination must be founded upon reasons which the law approves, and it is my duty to see whether these reasons exist in the present case.

"To vindicate the policy of the law is no necessary part of the office of a judge; but, if it were, it would not be difficult to show that the law, in this respect, has acted with its usual wisdom and humanity—with that true wisdom and that real humanity that regards the general interests of mankind. For though, in particular cases, the repugnance of the law to dissolve the obligations of matrimonial cohabitation may operate with great severity upon individuals, yet it must be carefully remembered that the general happiness of the married life is secured by its indissolubility. When people understand that they *must* live together, except for a very few reasons known to the law, they learn to soften, by mutual accommodation, that yoke which they know they cannot shake off: they become good husbands and good wives from the necessity of remaining husbands and wives—for necessity is a powerful master in teaching the duties which it imposes. If it were once understood that, upon mutual disgust, married persons might be legally separated, many couples who now pass through the world with mutual comfort, with attention to their common offspring, and to the moral order of civil society, might have been at this moment living in a state of mutual unkindness—in a state of estrangement from their common offspring—and in a state of the most licentious and unreserved immorality. In this case, as in many others, the happiness of some individuals must be sacrificed to the greater and more general good."

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*1 Haggard, 35.

We wish we could follow the famous civilian through all the delicate windings of this "pretty quarrel" between Mr. and Mrs. Evans; the masterly analysis of the waiting-woman's motives; the elegant etiquette of the lying-in chamber; the prerogatives of the nurse, and fantastical distresses of the mistress—and give some specimens of Sir William Scott's gayer style. But the embroidery of each case is so equally woven, the effect so much depends upon harmony of colour and exact proportion; the sly humour is so nicely, and almost imperceptibly, mingled with the worldly wisdom, that it would be unjust to tear away fragments and exhibit them as specimens. If there is a fault it lies in a tendency to attenuation of the matter in sentences

> "With linked sweetness long drawn out;"

and yet it would be difficult to find a word we would change, or a sentence we would spare. Although the refinement of expression is almost undisturbed, the sense is always manly—nothing affected, sickly, or sentimental—but common sense arrayed in the garb of fancy. The vivid exhibition of scenes in domestic life; the opposition of motives and passions; all invested with a certain air from the rank in society of the suitors, (for the poor rarely indulge in the luxuries of the Consistory Court,) reminds us more of the style of comedy which was fading from the stage before Sir William Scott retired from the bench, and which his dramatic tastes particularly fitted him to appreciate. He must have been indignant, even when Garrick performed Archer, at the impudent usurpation by the hero of the Beau's Stratagem of the civilian's office, when he sets up a rival court of his own for the dissolution of unhappy partnerships for life, audaciously declares

> "Consent, if mutual, saves the lawyer's fee;"

and consequently destroys the Judge's function. In each of his best civic developments, the curtain seems lifted on an elegant drama of manners: husbands and wives quarrel and recriminate in dialogue almost as graceful as Sheridan's; youths of fortune become the appropriate prey of rustic lasses, in spite of obdurate fathers; and a good moral, better enforced than most stage conclusions, dismisses the parties and charms the audience. He once said he could furnish a series of stories from the annals of Doctors' Commons which should rival the Waverley Novels in interest; and we wish he had tried it!

In Lord Stowell's latter days a cause came before him which afforded a strong contrast to the vivacity of those nuptial and connubial contests which had glowed and sparkled and loured so often before him; and if dull in the progress, grew beautiful in the judgment. It involved a question between the churchwardens of the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn, and the patentee of iron coffins, on the right of a parishioner to burial in the crowded churchyard at the usual fees, when his last earthly mansion was composed of materials so durable as to resist for an unusual number of years that decomposition which might enable the narrow space to receive a due succession of occupiers. This subject, so shocking in some of its attendant details, so mortifying to human pride in some of its aspects, becomes in his hands suggestive of solemn but gentle disquisition on the essence of the sentiment which requires the reverent disposal of the dead, and on the forms through which, in various nations and times, it has been breathed. From the simplicity of patriarchal days, through the splendid varieties of that affected duration at which the Egyptian monarchs aimed, down to the humble necessities of a pauper funeral and brief sojourn of the untitled dead in a domicile of their own, before being associated directly with dust, he discourses—"turning all to favour," if not to "prettiness," and giving a vital interest to ashes and the urn. In his researches he delights to measure stately wit with that prodigious master in the empire of the grave, Sir Thomas Browne; and though he falls far short of the embossed grandeur of the sepulchral essay on "Urn-Burial," which stands alone for fantastic solemnity in English prose, he diffuses a gentle atmosphere over the poor-crowded cemetery, and regulates the ceremonies and gradations in the world of death with the same Grandisonian air with which he had adjusted the contests of the fair and innocent and frail among the living. After discussing the modes of sepulture, and vindicating the authority of his court to arrange the differences, he thus sums up the matter in immediate dispute:—

"It being assumed that the court is justified in holding this opinion upon the fact of a comparative duration; the pretensions of these coffins to an admission upon the same pecuniary terms as those of wood, must resort to the other proposition, which declares that the difference of duration ought to produce no difference in those terms. Accordingly, it has been argued that the ground once given to the body is appropriated to it for ever—*it is literally in mortmain unalienably*—it is not only the *domus ultima*, but the *domus æterna* of that tenant, who is never to be disturbed, be his condition what it may—the introduction of another body into that lodgment at any time, however distant, is an unwarrantable intrusion. If these positions be true, it certainly follows that the question of comparative duration sinks into utter insignificance.

"In support of them, it seems to be assumed that the tenant himself is imperishable; for surely there can be no inextinguishable title, no perpetuity of possession, belonging to a subject which itself is perishable—but the fact is, that 'man,' and 'for ever,' are terms quite incompatible in any state of his existence, dead or living, in this world. The time must come when '*ipræ periere ruinæ*,' when the posthumous remains must mingle with and compose a part of that soil in which they have been deposited. Precious embalments and costly monuments may preserve for a long time the remains of those who have filled the more commanding stations of human life—but the common lot of mankind furnishes no such means of conservation. With reference to them, the *domus æterna* is a mere flourish of rhetoric; the process of nature will speedily resolve them into an intimate mixture with their kindred dust; and their dust will help to furnish a place of repose for other occupants in succession."

These seem serious matters of disquisition for advanced age; but Lord Stowell, like his brother, was too vividly assured of the life beyond the grave to contemplate the close of this life and the subsequent decay of his mortal frame with anxiety; and though his faculties almost faded before he sunk into the tomb—gently as he had lived, and talked, and judged—his serenity of mind was undisturbed, and his grace of manner even to the last lingered about him.

In finally contemplating the history of these two brothers, we are struck with the harmonious interest which the picture derives from their unenvying, unbroken affection, which must have doubled to each the pride and success of his own life in that of the other. To William, John Scott, Lord Eldon, owed that he was not a tradesman in a country town; and year after year, as poverty pressed on him and briefs came slowly, he was indebted to the purse of one who felt the full value of money, but insisted on investing his own savings in his brother's fortune. Both sharing the same undoubting faith in the Established Church of their country; the same dread of innovation; the same recollections of their arduous, painful, merry school-days, and of the loveliness of the same university—they found in the differences of their tastes new grounds of mutual congratulation and pride,—Sir William delighting to speak of Sir John's almost incredible labours; while the attorney-general took credit for the civilian's gentle gayeties, and grew proud while listening to his social praise. Both were charged with an undue love of pecuniary accumulation; and, no doubt, they went firmly on, almost with equal steps, to the attainment of great wealth; but this not so much with an ignoble desire of mere money, as the steady wish to achieve an end of which the gain was only the symbol, and its amount the proof—part of that single aspiration to get the start of their fellows in the game of life, which disregarded all minor excitements, vanities, and successes, and placed '*Respice Finem*' for its rule. The bounties of Lord Eldon were unostentatious, frequent, and sometimes princely; magnificently conceived and often dexterously hidden; and although the long possession of the Great Seal enabled him to rival the estate which Lord Stowell derived literally from the fortune of war, there seems no reason to doubt the sincerity of the regret with which he left the Court of Common Pleas—the quiet of which suited his disposition, while its dignified office of administering the law of real property by ancient forms now no more, proposed to him genial labours and serene decisions. Both, indeed, were chargeable with a want of the splendid hospitality befitting their station;—a fault the more to be regretted in the case of Lord Eldon, who, while filling at the bar its first offices, and during his long possession of the most dignified of all civil positions under the crown, had cast upon him the duty of keeping alive the social spirit of the bar; encouraging its young and timid aspirants; disarming jealousies, and soothing the animosities which its contests may engender; and preserving its common conscience and feeling of honour, by encouraging the association of its members in convivial enjoyments under the highest auspices. But Mr. Twiss gives the true excuse—we can scarcely admit it as a perfect justification—for a dereliction of that duty which fortune casts on her favourites—in the distaste of Lady Eldon for society, and in the habits which she acquired when obliged to practise rigid self-denial,—and asserts, we believe truly, that " his domestic arrangements, from the time of his lady's death, were such as befitted his great fortune and high station." This was, however, too late to repair the opportunities lost during many years, of not only securing the love but sustaining the character of the profession, to which he was devotedly attached in all its branches.

If, however, these great lawyers were not prodigal of extensive entertainments, they loved good cheer themselves, and delighted to believe that it was enjoyed by others. No total abstinence, nor half-abstinence, system was theirs. Whether the statement be true, which the genial biographer of Lord Stowell in the " Law Magazine" makes, "That he would often take the refection of the Middle Temple Hall by way of whet for the eight o'clock banquet," we will not venture to assert; but we well remember, more than thirty years ago, the benignant smile which Sir William Scott would cast on the students rising in the dim light of their glorious hall, as he passed out from the dinner table to his wine in the parliament chamber; his faded dress and tattered silk gown set off by his innate air of elegance; and his fine pale features beaming with a serene satisfaction which bumpers might heighten but could not disturb. He and Lord Eldon perfectly agreed in one great taste—if a noble thirst should be called by so finical a name—an attachment to port wine, strong almost as that to constitution and crown; and, indeed, a modification of the same sentiment. Sir William Scott may possibly in his lighter moods have dallied with the innocence of claret—or, in excess of the gallantry for which he was famed, have crowned a compliment to a fair listener with a glass of champagne—but, in his sedater hours, he stood fast by the port, which was the daily refreshment of Lord Eldon for a large segment of a century. It is, indeed, the proper beverage of a great lawyer—that by the strength of which Blackstone wrote his Commentaries—and Sir William Grant meditated his judgments—and Lord Eldon repaired the ravages of study, and withstood the shocks of party and of time. This sustaining, tranquillizing power, is the true cement of various labours, and prompter of great thoughts. Champagne, and hock, and claret, may animate the glittering superficial course of a *Nisi Prius* leader—though Erskine used to share his daily bottle of port with his wife and children, and complain, as his family increased, of the diminution of his residue—but port only can harmonize with the noble simplicity of ancient law, or assuage the fervour of a great intellectual triumph. Each of the Scotts, to a very late period of his old age, was true to the generous liquor, and renewed in it the pastimes of youth and the crowding memories of life-long labour. It is related of Lord Stowell, that, a short time before his death, having, in the deepening twilight of his powers, submitted to a less genial regimen, on a visit from his brother he resumed his glass: and, as he quaffed, the light of early days flashed upon his overwrought brain—its inner chamber was irradiated with its ancient splendour—and he told old stories with all that exquisite felicity which had once charmed young and old, the care-worn and the fair—and talked of old friends and old times with more than the happiness of middle age. When Lord Eldon visited him in his season of decay at his seat near Reading, he sometimes slept at Maidenhead on his way; and on one occasion, having dined at the inn, and learned that the revising barristers were staying at the house, he desired his compliments to be presented to them, and requested the favour of their company to share his wine. He received the young gentlemen—very young compared with their host—with the kindest courtesy; talked of his early struggles and successes as much for their edification as delight—and finished *at least* his own bottle of port before they parted. Surely no lighter or airier liquor could befit such festal hours of honoured old age, or so well link long years together in the memory by its flavours!

In closing this imperfect notice of the lives of Lord Eldon and Lord Stowell, we venture to express a hope that Mr. Twiss's work, minutely tracing the course of one and reviving the remembrance of the other, will fix the attention of his own profession on examples which have raised, and should help to sustain it. If so, the work will be in good season. Great as the influence of the profession of the law is in this country, many causes have tended of late to perplex the objects of its ambition, and to tempt its aspirants to lower means of success than steady industry and conduct free from stain. The number of inferior offices which suggest the appliances of patronage, and offer low *stimuli* to its hopes—the increase of numbers, which weakens the power of moral control, while it heightens the turmoil of competition—and a feeling which pervades a certain class of members of the House of Commons, that any measure which detracts from the resources of the bar tends to the public good—have endangered the elevation of its character, in the maintenance of which the interests of order and justice are deeply involved. We can conceive of no more vivid proof of the importance of preserving a body which embraces within it alike the younger sons of our nobility and the aspirants of the middle classes, and offers to all the opportunity of achieving its highest and most lasting honours, than that which the history of the two sons of the good coal-fitter of Newcastle exhibits: nor any happier incitement to that industry which is power, and to that honour which is better than all gain, than the example it presents to those who may follow in their steps.

SPEECH FOR THE DEFENDANT,

IN THE PROSECUTION OF THE QUEEN *v.* MOXON, FOR THE PUBLICATION OF SHELLEY'S WORKS.

DELIVERED IN THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH, JUNE 23, 1841.

PREFACE.

In consenting to revise and publish the following Speech, I trust the circumstances attendant on the trial in which it was delivered will be found to justify an exception to the usual abstinence of Counsel from interfering with the publication of speeches delivered at the bar. The peculiarity of the occasion—the prosecution of an eminent publisher of unblemished character at the instance of a person who had been himself convicted of blasphemous libel, on a similar charge—and the nature of the question which that prosecution involved, between Literature and the Law of Libel—may render the attempt of the defendant's advocate, to defeat the former and to solve the latter, worthy of more consideration than it could command either by its power or its success. Observing that the case has been unavoidably deprived, by the urgency of political topics and electioneering details, of the notice it would have received from the press at a calmer season; and being anxious that the references necessarily made to matters of solemn interest and of delicate relation should not be subject to the misconception attendant on any imperfect reports, I have thought it right to take on myself the responsibility of presenting to the public, as correctly as I can, the substance of that which I addressed to the jury. The necessary brevity of the reports of the trial, which has partly induced this publication of the speech for the defendant, also renders it proper to give a short account of the circumstances which preceded it.

In the month of April, 1840, an indictment was preferred against Mr. Henry Hetherington, a bookseller in the Strand, at the instance of the Attorney-general, for selling certain numbers of a work entitled "Haslam's Letters to the Clergy of all Denominations," sold each at the price of *one penny*, and charging them as libels on the Old Testament. The cause came on to be tried before Lord Denman, in the Court of Queen's Bench, on 8th December, 1840, when the defence was conducted, with great propriety and talent, by the defendant himself, who rested it mainly on a claim of unqualified right to publish all matters of opinion, and on the argument, that the work charged as blasphemous came fairly within the operation of that principle. Mr. Hetherington was, however, convicted, and ultimately received judgment, under which he underwent an imprisonment of four months in the Queen's Bench prison.

While this prosecution was pending, Mr. Hetherington appears to have adopted the design of becoming in his turn the Prosecutor of several booksellers for the sale of the complete edition of Shelley's Works, which had been recently issued by Mr. Moxon in a form similar to that in which he had published the collected works of the greatest English poets. He accordingly commissioned a person named Holt, then a compositor in his employ, to apply for the work at the shops of several persons eminent in the trade, and thus succeeded in obtaining copies of Mr. Moxon, of Mr. Fraser, and of Mr. Otley, or rather of the persons in their employ. On the sales thus obtained, indictments were preferred at the Central Criminal Court against the several vendors, which, with a similar indictment against Mr. Marshall, doubtless preferred by the same Prosecutor, were removed by *certiorari* at the instance of the defendants, and set down for trial by special juries. Mr. Moxon felt that, as the original publisher of the edition, he ought to bear the first attack; and therefore, although some advantage might have been gained by placing the case of a mere vendor before his own, he declined to use it, and entered his own cause the first of the series which were to be tried in Middlesex. These causes were called on for trial at the sittings after Hilary term; but the prosecutor was not prepared with the Attorney-general's warrant to pray a *tales* to supply the default of the special jury, and as the counsel for the defendant did not think it right to expedite his proceedings by doing so themselves, the cause went over, and ultimately came on for trial on Wednesday 23d June, when nine special jurymen appeared, and the panel was completed by a *tales* prayed for the prosecution.

The indictment against Mr. Moxon, which the others exactly resembled, charged that he, "being an evil-disposed and wicked person, disregarding the laws and religion of this realm, and wickedly and profanely devising and intending to bring the Holy Scriptures and the Christian religion into disbelief and contempt, unlawfully and wickedly, did falsely and maliciously publish a scandalous, impious, profane, and malicious libel of and concerning the Christian religion, and of and concerning the Holy Scriptures, and of and concerning Almighty God," in which were contained certain passages charged as blasphemous and profane. It then set forth a passage in blank verse, beginning, "*They have three words: well tyrants know their use,* *well pay them for the loan, with usury torn from a bleeding world!—God, Hell, and Heaven;*" and after adding an innuendo, "*meaning thereby that God, Hell, and Heaven, were merely words,*" proceeded to recite a few more lines, applying very coarse and irreverent, but not very intelligible comments to each of those words. It then charged, that the libel contained, in other parts, two other passages, also in verse, and to which the same character may be justly applied.[*] It lastly set forth a passage of prose from the notes, the object of which seems to be to assert, that the belief in the plurality of worlds is inconsistent with "religious systems," and with "deifying the principle of the universe;" and which, after speaking in very disrespectful terms of the statements of Christian history as "irreconcilable with the knowledge of the stars," concludes with the strange inconsistency pointed out by Lord Denman in his charge, (if the author's intention was to deny the being of God,) "The work of *His* fingers have borne witness against them."

The case for the prosecution was opened by Mr. Thomas with a judicious abstinence from any remark on the motives or object of the Prosecutor, and without informing the jury who the Prosecutor was. He stated several cases, and dicta to establish the general proposition, that a work tending to bring religion into contempt and odium is an offence against the common law, and, among others, that of Mr. Hetherington; read, besides the indicted passages, several others of a similar character, all selected from the poem of "Queen Mab;" eloquently eulogized the genius of Shelley, and fairly admitted the respectability of the defendant; and concluded by expressing the satisfaction he should feel if the result of this trial should establish, that no publications on religion should be subject for prosecution in future. He then called Thomas Holt, who proved the purchase of the volume for twelve shillings at Mr. Moxon's shop; and who also proved, on cross-examination, that he made the purchase and others at the desire of Mr. Hetherington, whom he understood to be the Prosecutor in this and the succeeding causes.

The success of such a prosecution, proceeding from such a quarter, gives rise to very serious considerations; for although, in determining sentences, Judges will be able to diminish the evil, by a just discrimination between the publication of the complete works of an author of established fame, for the use of the studious, and for deposit in libraries, and the dissemination of cheap irreligion, directed to no object but to unsettle the belief of the reader—the power of prosecuting to conviction every one who may sell, or give, or lend any work containing passages to which the indictable character may be applied, is a fearful engine of oppression. Should such prosecutions be multiplied, and juries should not feel justified in adopting some principle of distinction like that for which I have feebly endeavoured to contend, they must lead to some alteration in the law, or to some restriction of the right to set it in action. It will, I think, be matter of regret among many who desire to respect the Law, and to see it wisely applied, that the question should have arisen; but since it has been so painfully raised, it is difficult to avoid it; and if the following address should present any materials for its elucidation, it will not, although unsuccessful in its immediate object, have been delivered entirely in vain. T. N. T.

Serjeant's Inn, 28th June, 1841.

SPEECH,

May it please your Lordship,
Gentlemen of the Jury,

It has sometimes been my lot to express, and much oftener to feel, a degree of anxiety in addressing juries, which has painfully diminished the little power which I can ever command in representing the interests committed to my charge; but never has that feeling been so excited, and so justified, by any occasion as that on which it is my duty to address you. I am called from the Court in which I usually practise, to defend from the odious charge of blasphemy one with whom I have been acquainted for many years—one whom I have always believed incapable of wilful offence towards God or towards man—one who was introduced to me in early and happy days, by the dearest of my friends who are gone before me—by Charles Lamb—to whom the wife of the defendant was as an adopted daughter; and who, dying, committed the interests which he left her in the products of his life of kindness to my charge. Would to God that the spirit which pervaded his being could decide the fate of this strange prosecution—I should only have to pronounce his name and to receive your verdict.

Apart from these personal considerations, there is something in the nature of the charge itself, however unjustly applied to the party accused, which must depress a Christian advocate addressing a Christian jury. On all other cases of accusation, he would implore the jurors, sworn to decide between the accuser and the defendant, to lay aside every prepossession—to forget every rumour—to strip themselves of every prejudice—to suppress every affection, which could prevent the exercise of a free and unclouded judgment; and, having made this appeal, or having forborne to make it as needless, he would regard the jury-box as a sacred spot, raised above all encircling influences, to which he might address the arguments of justice and mercy with the assurance of obtaining a decision only divested of the certainty of unerring truth by the imperfection of human evidence and of human reason. But in this case you cannot grant—I cannot ask—the cold impartiality which on all other charges may be sought and expected from English juries. Sworn on the Gospel to try a charge of wickedly and profanely attempting to bring that Gospel, and the holy religion which it reveals, into disbelief and contempt, you are reminded even by that oath—if it were possible you could ever forget—of the deep, the solemn, the imperishable interest you have in those sacred things which the defendant is charged with assailing. The feelings which such a charge awakens are not like those political differences which it is delightful sometimes to forget or to trample on;—or those local partialities which it is ennobling to forsake for a wider sphere of contemplation—or those hasty opinions which the daily press, in its vivid course, has scattered over our thoughts, and which we are proud sometimes to bring to the test of dispassionate reflection;—or those worldly interests which, if they sway the honourable mind at all, incline it to take part against them;—but the emotions which this charge enkindles are intertwined with all that endears the Past and peoples the Future—with all that renders this life noble by enriching it with the hope of that which is to come. If the passages which have been read to you—torn asunder from the connection in which they stand—regarded without reference to the time, the object, the mode of their publication,—should array you at this moment almost as plaintiffs, personally wronged and insulted, against their publisher, I must not complain; for I shall not be provoked, even by the peculiarity of this charge, to defend Mr. Moxon by a suggestion which can violate the associations which are intertwined with all that is dear to you. He would rather submit to the utmost consequences which the selfish recklessness of this prosecution could entail, if you should sanction, and the court hereafter should support, its aim; he would rather be severed from the family whom he cherishes, and from the society of the good and the great in our literature, which he is privileged to share; than he would obtain immunity by a recourse to those weapons which the prosecutor would fain present to his choice. Neither will I, notwithstanding the anticipation of my learned friend, ask you to palter with your consciences, and, because you may doubt or deny the policy of the law which is thus set in action, invite you to do other than administer justice according to your oath and your duty. I take my stand on Christian ground; I base my defence on the recognised law; and if I do not show you that the Christianity, which the prosecutor most needlessly presumes to vindicate, and the law which with unhallowed hands he is striving to pervert, justify your verdict of acquittal, I am content that you should become the instruments of his attempt to retort the penalties of his own sentence on one who never wronged him even in thought—that you should aid him to render the law under which he has suffered, odious by sanctioning the odious application which he contemplates; and that at his bidding you should scatter through the loftiest and serenest paths of literature, distress, and doubt, and dismay, awarding him that success which, "if not victory, is yet revenge."

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[*] It has not been thought necessary to the argument to set out these passages; as it proceeds on the admission, that, separately considered, they are very offensive both to piety and good taste.

The charge which Mr. Moxon is called upon to answer is, that with a wicked intention to bring the Holy Scriptures and the Christian religion into contempt, he published the volume which is in evidence before you, and which is characterized as a libel on that religion, on the Scriptures, and on Almighty God. I speak advisedly when I say *the whole volume is thus indicted;* it must be so considered in point of justice—it is so charged in point of form. The indictment, indeed, sets forth four passages, torn violently asunder from their context; yet it does not charge them as separate libels, but as portions of one "impious, blasphemous, profane and malicious libel," in different parts of which the selected parts are found. Now these are not all to be found even in one poem, for the first three being in poetry, the last is taken from a mass of prose appended to the first poem of "Queen Mab," and intervening between it and a poem entitled "Alastor," which is the next in the series. And if this were not the form of the record, can it be doubted that, in point of justice, the scope, the object, the tendency of the entire publication, must be determined before you can decide on the guilt or innocence of the party who has thus published the passages charged as blasphemous? Supposing some question of law should be raised on the sufficiency of the indictment in which they are inserted, and they should be copied necessarily for the elucidation of the argument in one of the reports in which the decisions of this court are perpetuated; would the reporter, the law-bookseller, the officer of the court, who should hand the volume to a barrister, be guilty of blasphemy? Or if they should appear in some correct report, partaking of a more popular form, and that report should be indicted as containing them, what form would the question of the guilt or innocence of the publisher assume? Would it not be, whether he had been honestly anxious to lay before the world the history of an unexampled attempt to degrade and destroy the law, under pretence of asserting it; or whether he was studious to disseminate some fragments of strange and fearful audacity, and had professed to report an extraordinary trial, only as a pretext to cover the popular dissemination of blasphemy? And would not the form, the commentary, the occasion, the price, all be material in deciding whether the work were laudable or guilty—whether, as a whole, it tended to good or to evil? These passages, like details and pictures in works of anatomy and surgery, are either innocent or criminal, according to the accompaniments which surround them, and the class to whom they are addressed. If really intended for the eye of the scientific student, they are most innocent; but if so published as to manifest another intention, they will not be protected from legal censure by the flimsy guise of science. By a similar test let this publication be judged! If its whole tenor lead you to believe that the dissemination of irreligious feelings was its object—nay, that such will be its natural consequence—let Mr. Hetherington have his triumph; but if you believe that these words, however offensive when abstractedly taken, form part of a great intellectual and moral phenomenon, which may be disclosed to the class of readers who alone will purchase the volume, not only without injury, but to their instruction, you will joyfully find Mr. Moxon as free from blasphemy in contemplation of the strictest law, as I know he is in purpose and in spirit.

The passages selected as specimens of the indicted libel are found in a complete edition of the works of Percy Bysshe Shelley—a work comprising more than twenty thousand lines of verse, and occupy something less than the three-hundredth part of the volume which contains them. The book presents the entire intellectual history—true and faithful, because traced in the series of those works which were its events—of one of the most extraordinary persons ever gifted and doomed to illustrate the nobleness, the grandeur, the imperfections, and the progress of human genius—whom it pleased God to take from this world while the process harmonizing his stupendous powers was yet incomplete, but not before it had indicated its beneficent workings. It is edited by his widow, a lady endowed with great and original talent, who, as she states in her preface, hastens "to fulfil an important duty, that of giving the productions of a sublime genius to the world, with all the correctness possible, and of, at the same time, detailing the history of these productions as they sprang, warm and living, from his heart and brain." And, accordingly, the poems are all connected together by statements as to the circumstances under which they were written, and the feelings which inspired them. The "alterations (says Mrs. Shelley) his opinions underwent ought to be recorded, for they form his history."

The first of these works is a poem, written at the age of eighteen, entitled "Queen Mab;" a composition marked with nothing to attract the casual reader—irregular in versification, wild, disjointed, visionary; often difficult to be understood even by a painful student of poetry, and sometimes wholly unintelligible even to him; but containing as much to wonder at, to ponder on, to weep over, as any half-formed work of genius which ever emanated from the vigour and the rashness of youth. This poem, which I shall bring before you presently, is followed by the marvellous series of works of which "Alastor," "The Revolt of Islam," the "Prometheus Unbound," and "The Cenci" form the principal, exhibiting a continuous triumph of mellowing and consecrating influences, down to the moment when sudden death shrouded the poet's career from the observation of mortals. Now the question is, whether it is blasphemy to present to the world—say rather to the calm, the laborious, the patient searcher after wisdom and beauty, who alone will peruse this volume—the awful mistakes, the mighty struggles, the strange depressions, and the imperfect victories of such a spirit, because the picture has some passages of frightful gloom. I am far from contending that every thing which genius has in rashness or in wantonness produced, becomes, when once committed to the press, the inalienable property of mankind. Such a principle, indeed, seems to be involved in an argument which was recently sanctioned by the authority of a Cabinet Minister more distinguished even as a profound thinker and an eloquent and accomplished critic, than by political station. When I last urged the claim of the descendants of men of genius to be the guardians of their fame, as well as the recipients of its attendant rewards, I was met with denial on the plea that, from some fastidiousness of taste, or some over-niceness of moral apprehension, the hereditary representatives of a great writer may cover his works with artificial oblivion. I have asked, whether, if a poet has written "some line which, dying, he may wish to blot," he shall not be allowed by the insatiate public to blot it dying; and I have asked in vain! Fielding and Richardson have been quoted, as writers whose works, multiplying as they will through all time the sources of innocent enjoyment, might have been suppressed by some too dainty moralist. Now, admitting that the tendency of Fielding's works, taken as a whole, is as invigorating as it is delightful, I fear there are chapters which, if taken from their connection—apart from the healthful atmosphere in which their impurities evaporate and die—and printed at some penny cost for dissemination among the young, would justly incur the censure of that law which has too long withheld its visitations from those who have sought a detestable profit by spreading cheap corruption through the land. It may be true, as Dr. Johnson ruled, that Richardson "had taught the passions to move at the command of virtue;" and, as was recently asserted, that Mrs. Hannah More "first learned from his writings those principles of piety by which her life was guided;" but (to leave out of consideration the Adventures of Pamela, which must sometimes have put Mrs. Hannah More to the blush) I fear that selections might be made, even from the greatest of all prose romances, Clarissa Harlowe, which the Society for the Suppression of Vice would scarcely endure. Do I wish them therefore suppressed? No! Because in these massive volumes the antidote is found with the bane; because the effect of Lovelace's daring pleas for vice, and of pictures yet more vicious, is neutralized by the scenes of passion and suffering which surround them; because the unsullied image of heroic purity and beautiful endurance rises fairer from amidst the encircling pollutions, and conquers every feeling but those of admiration and pity. Yet if detached scenes were, like these passages of Shelley, selected for the prosecution, how could they be defended—but, like them, by reference to the spirit, and intent, and tendency of the entire work from which they were torn? And yet the defence would be less conclusive than that which I now offer; as descriptions which appeal to passion are far less capable of correction by accompanying moralities, than the cold speculations of a wild infidelity by the considerations which the history of their author's mind supplies. In the wise and just dispensations of Providence great powers are often found associated with weakness or with sorrow; but when these are not blended with the intellectual greatness they countervail, but merely affect the personal fortunes of their possessors—as when a sanguine temperament leads into vicious excesses—there is no more propriety in unveiling the truth, because it *is* truth, than in exhibiting the details of some physical disease. But when the greatness of the poet's intellect contains within itself the elements of tumult and disorder—when the appreciation of the genius, in all its divine relations and all its human lapses, depends on a view of the entire picture, must it be withheld? It is not a sinful Elysium, full of lascivious blandishments, but a heaving chaos of mighty elements, that the publisher of the early productions of Shelley unveils. In such a case, the more awful the alienation, the more pregnant with good will be the lesson. Shall this life, fevered with beauty, restless with inspiration, be hidden: or, wanting its first blind but gigantic efforts, be falsely, because partially, revealed? If to trace back the stream of genius, from its greatest and most lucid earthly breadth to its remotest fountain, is one of the most interesting and instructive objects of philosophic research, shall we—when we have followed that of Shelley through its majestic windings, beneath the solemn glooms of "The Cenci," through the glory-tinged expanses of "The Revolt of Islam," amidst the dream-like haziness of the "Prometheus"—be forbidden to ascend with painful steps its narrowing course to its furthest spring, because black rocks may encircle the spot whence it rushes into day, and demon shapes—frightful but powerless for harm—may gleam and frown on us beside it?

Having thus endeavoured to present to you the foundation of my defence—that the volume in which these passages appear is in its substance historical, and that, so far from being adopted by the compiler, they are presented as necessary to historical truth—I will consider the passages themselves, and the poem in which they appear, with a view to inquire whether they are of a nature capable of being fairly regarded as innoxious in their connection with Shelley's life. Admitting, as I do, that if published with an aim to commend them to the reader as the breathings or suggestions of truth—nay, that if recklessly published in such a manner as to present them to the reader for approval, they deserve all the indignation which can be lavished on them; I cannot think, even then, they would have power to injure. They appeal to no passion—they pervert no affection—they find nothing in human nature, frail as it always is, guilty as it sometimes becomes—to work on. Contemplated apart from the intellectual history of the extraordinary being who produced them, and from which they can never be severed by any reader of this book, they would excite no feelings but those of wonder at their audacity, and pity for their weakness. Not only are they incapable of awakening any chords of evil in the soul, but they are ineffectual even to present to it an intelligible heresy. "We understand a fury in the words—but not the words." What do they import? Is it atheism?—or is it mad defiance of a God by one who believes and hates, yet does not tremble? To the first passage, commencing, "*They have three words*"—"*God, Hell, and Heaven!*"—the prosecutor does not venture to affix any meaning at all, but tears them from their context, and alleges that they are part of a libel on the Holy Scriptures, though there is no reference in them to the Bible, or to any Scripture doctrine; nor does the indictment supply any definite meaning or reference to explain or to answer. To the second paragraph—

> Is there a God?—ay, an Almighty God,
> And vengeful as almighty! Once his voice
> Was heard on earth: earth shudder'd at the sound;
> The fiery-visaged firmament express'd
> Abhorrence, and the grave of nature yawn'd
> To swallow all the dauntless and the good
> That dared to hurl defiance at his throne,
> Girt as it was with power—

the indictment does present a most extended innuendo; "*Thereby meaning and referring to the Scripture history of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and meaning that the said Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were dauntless and good, and were so dauntless and good for daring to hurl defiance at the throne of Almighty God.*" This is, indeed, a flight of the poetry of pleading—a construction which you must find as the undoubted sense of the passage—before you can sustain this part of the accusation. But again, I ask, is there any determinate meaning in these "wild and whirling words?" Are they more than atoms of chaotic thought not yet subsided into harmony—over which the Spirit of Love has not yet brooded, so as to make them pregnant with life, and beauty, and joy? But suppose, for a moment, they nakedly assert atheism—never was there an error which, thus incidentally exhibited, had less power to charm. How far it is possible that such a miserable dogma, dexterously insinuated into a perplexed understanding or a corrupted heart, may find reception, I will not venture to speculate, but I venture to affirm that thus nakedly presented, as the dream of a wild fancy, it can at most only glare for a moment, a bloodless phantom, and pass into kindred nothing! Or do the words rather import a belief in a God—the ruling Power of the universe—yet an insane hatred of his attributes? Is it possible to contemplate the creature of a day standing up amidst countless ages—like a shadowy film among the confused grandeur of the universe—thus propelled, with any other feeling than those of wonder and pity? Or do these words merely import that the name and attributes of the Supreme Being have been abused and perverted by "the oppressors of mankind," for their own purposes, to the misery of the oppressed? Or do they vibrate and oscillate between all these meanings, so as to leave the mind in a state of perplexity, balancing and destroying each other? In either case, they are powerless for evil. Unlike that seductive infidelity which flatters the pride of the understanding, by glittering sophistry—or that still more dangerous infidelity, which gratifies its love of power by bitter sarcasm—or that most dangerous of all which perverts the sensibilities, and corrupts the affections—it resembles that evil of which Milton speaks, when, with a boldness which the fastidious might deem profane, he exclaims,

> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
> No spot or blame behind.

If, regarded in themselves, these passages were endowed with any power of mischief, the manner in which they are introduced in the poem—or rather phantasm of a poem—of "Queen Mab" must surely neutralize them. It has no human interest—no local affinities—no machinery familiar even to thought. It opens in a lyrical measure, wanting even the accomplishment of rhyme, with an apostrophe uttered, no one knows by whom or where, on a sleeping nymph—whether human or divine—the creature of what mythology—on earth or in some other sphere—is unexplained; all we know is, that the lady or spirit is called *Ianthe*. Thus it begins:—

> How wonderful is Death—
> Death and his brother Sleep!
> One, pale as yonder waning moon,
> With lips of lurid blue;
> The other, rosy as the morn
> When, throned in Ocean's wave,
> It blushes o'er the world;
> Yet both so passing wonderful!
>
> Hath then the gloomy power
> Whose reign is in the tainted sepulchres
> Seized on her sinless soul?
> Must then that peerless form,
> Which love and admiration cannot view
> Without a beating heart—those azure veins
> Which steal like streams along a field of snow—
> That lovely outline which is fair
> As breathing marble, perish?
> Must putrefaction's breath
> Leave nothing of this heavenly sight
> But loathsomeness and ruin!
> Spare nothing but a gloomy theme,
> On which the lightest heart might moralize?
> Or is it only a sweet slumber
> Stealing o'er sensation,
> Which the breath of roseate morning
> Chaseth into darkness?
> Will Ianthe wake again,
> And give that faithful bosom joy,
> Whose sleepless spirit waits to catch
> Light, life, and rapture from her smile?

The answer to the last question is, that Ianthe will awake,—which is expressed in terms appropriately elaborate and mystical. But while she is thus sleeping, the Fairy Mab descends—invites the soul of the nymph to quit her form—and conveys it through systems, suns, and worlds to the temple of "The Spirit of Nature," where the Fairy and the Soul enter "The Hall of Spells," and a kind of phantasmagoria passes before them, in which are dimly seen representations of the miseries, oppressions, and hopes of mankind. Few, indeed, are the readers who will ever enter the dreary portals of that fane, or gaze on the wild intermixture of half-formed visions and theories which gleam through the hazy prospects seen from its battlements. The discourse of the Fairy—to the few who have followed that dizzy career—is an extraordinary mixture of wild rhapsody on the miseries attendant on humanity, and the supposed errors of its faith, and of fancies "of the moonshine's watery beams." After the "obstinate questioning" respecting the existence of a God, this Fairy—who is supposed to deny all supernatural existence—calls forth a shape of one whose imaginary being is entirely derived from Christian tradition—Ahasuerus, the Jew—who is said to have scoffed at our Saviour as he bore his cross to Calvary, and to have been doomed by Him to wander on the earth until His second coming. Of this phantom the question is asked, "*Is there a God?*" and to him are the words ascribed in answer which form the second and third portions of the Prosecutor's charge. Can any thing be conceived more inconsistent—more completely self-refuted—and therefore more harmless? The whole machinery, indeed, answers to the description of the Fairy,—

> The matter of which dreams are made,
> Not more endow'd with actual life,
> Than this phantasmal portraiture
> Of wandering human thought.

All, indeed, is fantastical—nothing clear except that atheism, and the materialism on which alone atheism can rest, are refuted in every page. If the being of God is in terms denied—which I deny—it is confessed in substance; and what injury can an author do, who one moment deprecates the "deifying the Spirit of the universe," and the next himself deifies "the spirit of nature,"—speaks of her "eternal breath," and fashions for her "a fitting temple!" Nay, in this strange poem, the spiritual immunities of the soul and its immortal destinies are distinctly asserted amidst all its visionary splendours. The Spirit of Ianthe is supposed to arise from the slumbering body, and to stand beside it; while the poet thus represents each:—

> 'Twas a sight
> Of wonder to behold the body and soul.
> The self-same lineaments, the same
> Marks of identity were there,
> Yet, Oh how different! One aspires to heaven,
> Pants for its sempiternal heritage,
> And ever changing, ever rising, still
> Wantons in endless being;
> The other for a time the unwilling sport
> Of circumstance and passion, struggles on,
> Fleets through its sad duration rapidly;
> Then, like a useless and worn-out machine,
> Rots, perishes, and passes.

Now, when it is found that this poem, thus containing the doctrine of immortality, is presented with the distinct statement that Shelley himself in maturer life departed from its offensive dogmas—when it is accompanied by his own letter in which he expresses his wish for its suppression—when, therefore, it is not given even as containing *his* deliberate assertions, but only as a feature in the development of his intellectual character—surely all sting is taken out of the rash and uncertain passages which have been selected as indicating blasphemy! But is it not antidote enough to the poison of a pretended atheism, that the poet who is supposed to-day to deny Deity, finds Deity in all things!

I cannot proceed with this defence without feeling that I move tremulously among sacred things which should be approached only in serene contemplation; that I am compelled to solicit your attention to considerations more fit to be weighed in the stillness of thought than amidst the excitements of a public trial; and that I am able only to suggest reasonings which, if woven into a chain, no strength of mine could utter, nor your kindest patience follow. But the fault is not mine. I cannot otherwise even hint the truth—the living truth—of this case to your minds as it fills and struggles in my own, or protect my client and friend from a prosecution without parallel in our legal history. If the prosecutor, in return for his own conviction of publishing some cheap and popular work of alleged blasphemy—prepared, calculated, and intended by the author to shake the religious principles of the uneducated and the young,—has attempted to assail the efforts of genius, and to bring into question the relations, the uses, the tendencies of the divinest faculties, I must not shrink from entreating you to consider those bearings of the question which are essential to its justice. And if you feel unable fully to examine them within the limits of a trial, and in the atmosphere of a court of justice, yet if you feel with me that they are necessary to a just decision, you cannot doubt what your duty to the defendant and to justice is, on a criminal charge! Pardon me, therefore, if I now seek to show you, by a great example, how unjustly you would deal with so vast and so divine a thing as the imagination of a poet, if you were to take his isolated passages which may seem to deal too boldly with sacred things, and—without regard to the process of the faculty by which they are educed—to brand them as the effusions of a blasphemous mind, or as tending to evil issues. That example will also show you how a poet—devoting the noblest powers to the loftiest themes—when he ventures to grapple with the spiritual existences revealed by the Christian faith, in the very purpose of vindicating "the ways of God to men," may seem to incur a charge like the present, and with as much justice, and may be absolved from it only by nice regard to the tendencies of the divine faculty he exerts. I speak not of a "marvellous boy," as Shelley was at eighteen, but of Milton, in the maturity of his powers, when he brought all the "spoils of time," and the clustered beauty hoarded through a long life, to the deliberate construction of a work which should never die. His case is the converse of that of Shelley—he begins from an opposite point; he falls into an opposite error; but he expatiates in language and imagery out of which Mr. Hetherington might shape a charge as spacious as that which he has given you to decide. Shelley fancies himself irreligious, and everywhere falters or trembles into piety; Milton, believing himself engaged in a most pious work, is led by the tendencies of his imagination to individualize—to adorn—to enthrone—the Enemy of God; and to invest his struggles against Omnipotence with all the nobleness of a *patriotic resistance to tyranny*, and his suffering from Almighty justice with the graces of fortitude. Let it not be urged that the language which his Satan utters is merely to be regarded with reference to dramatic proprieties—it is attributed to the being in whom the interest of his poem centres; and on whom admiration and sympathy attend as on a sufferer in the eternal struggle of right against power. Omnipotence becomes tyranny in the poet's vision, and resistance to its requisitions appears the more generous even because hopelessly vain. Before I advert to that language, and ask you to compare it with the expressions selected for prosecution, let me call to your recollection the grandeurs—nay, the luxuries of thought with which the "Lost Archangel" is surrounded;—the magic by which even out of the materials of torture dusky magnificence is created in his place of exile, beyond "the wealth of Ormus and of Ind;" and the faded glory and unconquerable spirit attributed to those rebel legions who still sustain him in opposition to the Most High. Observe the hosts, still angelic, as they march at his bidding!—

Anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
With dread of death, to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'suage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds.

Whether we listen to those who—

More mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing,
With notes angelical, to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle—

or those with whom the moral philosopher sympathizes yet more—who

Sat on a hill retired
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute—

or expatiate over the muster-roll of their chiefs, in which all the splendours of the East, the gigantic mysteries of Egypt, and the chastest forms of Grecian beauty gleam on us—all reflect back the greatness of Him who surveys them with "tears such as angels weep." His very armour and accoutrements glisten on us with a thousand beauties!

His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon ——

And not only like the moon as seen to the upturned gaze of ordinary men, but as associated with Italian art, and discerned from places whose names are music—

—— Like the moon whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains in her spotty globe.

"His spear" is not only likened to a pine hewn in the depth of mountain forests, but, as if the sublimest references to nature were insufficient to accumulate glories for the bearer, is consecrated by allusions to the thousand storms and thousand thunders which the mast of an imperial ship withstands.

> His spear (to equal which the tallest pine
> Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
> Of some great admiral, were but a wand)
> He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
> Over the burning marle; not like those steps
> On Heaven's azure.

Now, having seen how the great Christian Poet has lavished all the glories of his art on the attendant hosts and personal investiture of the brave opponent of Almighty Power, let us attend to the language in which he addresses his comrade in enterprise and suffering.

> Into what pit thou seest,
> From what height fallen—*so much the stronger proved*
> *He with his thunder:* and till then who knew
> The force of those dire arms? Yet *not for those,*
> *Nor what the potent Victor* in his RAGE
> *Can else inflict, do I repent or change,*
> *Though changed in outward lustre,* that fix'd mind,
> And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,
> That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
> And to the fierce contention brought along
> Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
> *That durst dislike His reign, and, me preferring,*
> *His utmost power with adverse power opposed*
> *In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,*
> *And shook His throne!*

Such is the force of the poet's enthusiastic sympathy with the speaker, that the reader almost thinks Omnipotence doubtful; or, if that is impossible, admires the more the courage that can resist it! The chief proceeds—

> What though the field be lost?
> All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
> And study of revenge, immortal hate,
> And courage never to submit or yield,
> And what is else not to be overcome;
> That glory never shall his wrath or might
> Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
> With suppliant knee, and deify His power,
> *Who from the terror of this arm so late*
> *Doubted his empire;* that were low indeed,
> That were an ignominy, and shame beneath
> This downfall!

This mighty representation of generous resistance, of mind superior to fortune, of resolution nobler than the conquest, concludes by proclaiming "eternal war" against Him—

> Who now triumphs, and in *the excess of joy,*
> Sole reigning, holds *the tyranny of heaven.*

Surely, but for the exquisite grace of the language compared with the baldness of Shelley's, I might parallel from this speech all that the indictment charges about "an Almighty Fiend" and "Tyrannous Omnipotence." Listen again to the more composed determination and sedate self-reliance of the archangelic sufferer!

> "Is this the region? this the soil, the clime?"
> Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat
> That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom
> For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
> Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
> What shall be right; *farthest from him is best,*
> *Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme*
> *Above his equals.* Farewell, happy fields,
> Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors, hail!
> Infernal world, and thou, profoundest hell,
> Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
> A mind not to be changed by place or time.
> The mind is its own place, and in itself
> Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.
> What matter where, if I be still the same?
> *And what I should* be, all *but less than* he
> *Whom thunder hath made greater.* Here at least
> We shall be free; the *Almighty hath not built*
> *Here for his envy,* will not drive us hence;
> Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
> To reign is worth ambition, though in hell;
> Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven!"

I might multiply passages of the same kind; but I dare only allude to the proposition made of assaulting the throne of God "with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire, *his own invented torments;*" and to the address of Satan to the newly-created sun, in which he actually curses the love of God. Suppose that last passage introduced into this indictment—suppose that instead of the unintelligible lines beginning "*They have three words, God, Hell, and Heaven,*" we had these—*Be then His love accursed,*" with the innuendo, "*Thereby meaning the love of Almighty God,*" how would you deal with the charge? How! but by looking at the object of the great poem of which those words are part; by observing how the poet, incapable of resting in a mere abstraction, had been led insensibly to clothe it from the armory of virtue and grandeur; by showing that although the names of the Almighty and Satan were retained, in truth, other ideas had usurped those names, as the theme itself had eluded even Milton's grasp! I will not ask you whether you agree with me in the defence which might be made for Milton; but I will ask, do you not feel with me that these are matters for another tribunal? Do you not feel with me that except that the boldness of Milton's thoughts comes softened to the ears by the exquisite beauty of Milton's language, I may find parallels in the passages I have quoted from the Paradise Lost, for those selected for prosecution from Queen Mab? Do you not feel with me that, as without a knowledge of the Paradise Lost, you could not absolve the publisher of Milton from the prosecution of "some mute inglorious" Hetherington; so neither can you, dare you, convict Mr. Moxon of a libel on God and religion, in publishing the works of Shelley, without having read and studied them all? If rashly you assail the mighty masters of thought and fantasy, you will, indeed, assail them in vain, for the purpose of suppression, though not for the purpose of torture; all you can do is to make them suffer, as being human, they are liable to corporal suffering; but, like the wounded spirits of Milton, "they will soon close," "confounded, though immortal!"

If, however, these are considerations affecting the exercise of human genius on themes beyond its grasp, which we cannot discuss in this place, however essential to the decision of the charge, there is one plain position which I will venture to assert: that the poetry which pretends to a denial of God or of an immortal life, MUST contain its own refutation in itself, and sustain what it would deny! A poet, though never one of the highest order, may "link vice to a radiant angel;" he may diffuse luxurious indifference to virtue and to truth; but he cannot inculcate atheism. Let him strive to do it, and like Balaam, who came to curse, like him he must end in blessing! His art convicts him; for it is "*Eternity revealing itself in Time!*" His fancies may be wayward, his theories absurd, but they will prove, no less in their failure than in their success, the divinity of their origin, and the inadequacy of this world to give scope to his impulses. They are the beatings of the soul against the bars of its clay tenement, which though they may ruffle and sadden it, prove that it is winged for a diviner sphere! Young has said, "An undevout astronomer is mad;" how much more truly might he have said, an atheist poet is a contradiction in terms! Let the poet take what range of associations he will—let him adopt what notions he may—he cannot dissolve his alliance with the Eternal. Let him strive to shut out the vistas of the future by encircling the present with images of exquisite beauty; his own forms of ideal grace will disappoint him with eternal looks, and vindicate the immortality they were fashioned to veil! Let him rear temples, and consecrate them to fabled divinities, they will indicate in their enduring beauty "temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens!" If he celebrates the delights of social intercourse, the festal reference to their fragility includes the sense of that which must endure; for the very sadness which tempers them speaks the longing after that "which prompts the eternal sigh." If he desires to bid the hearts of thousands beat as one man at the touch of tragic passion, he must present "the future in the instant,"—show in the death-grapple of contending emotions a strength which death cannot destroy—vindicate the immortality of affection at the moment when the warm passages of life are closed against it; and anticipate in the virtue which dares to die, the power by which "mortality shall be swallowed up of life!" The world is too narrow for us. Time is too short for man,—and the poet only feels the sphere more inadequate, and pants for the "all-hail hereafter," with more urgent sense of weakness than his fellows:—

> Too—too contracted are these walls of flesh,
> This vital heat too cold; these visual orbs,
> Though inconceivably endow'd, too dim
> For any passion of the soul which leads
> To ecstasy, and all the frigid bonds
> Of time and change disdaining, takes the range
> *Along the line of limitless desires!*

If this prosecution can succeed, on what principle can the publishers of the great works of ancient times, replete with the images of idolatrous faith, and with moralities only to be endured as historical, escape a similar doom? These are the works which engage and reward the first labours of our English youth,—which, in spite of the objections raised to them, practically teach lessons of beauty and wisdom—the sense of antiquity—the admiration of heroic daring and suffering; and refine and elevate their lives. It was destined in the education of the human race, that imperfect and faint suggestions of truth, combined with exquisite perceptions of beauty, should in a few teeming years give birth to images of grace which, untouched by time, people the retreats which are sought by youthful toil, and make learning lovely. Why shall not these be brought, with the poetry of Shelley, within the range of criminal jurisdiction? Because, with all their beauty, they do not belong to the passions of the present time,—because they hold their dominion apart from the realities which form the business of life,—because they are presented to the mind as creations of another sphere, to be admired, not believed. And yet, without prosecution—without offence—one of the greatest and purest of our English poets, wearied with the selfishness which he saw pervading a Christian nation, has dared an ejaculating wish for the return of those old palpable shapes of divinity, when he exclaimed,

> Great God! I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
> So might I, standing on some pleasant lee,
> Have glimpses which may make me less forlorn,
> Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea,
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn!

And the fantasies of Queen Mab, if not so compact of imagination, are as harmless now as those forms of Grecian deities which Wordsworth thus invokes! Pure—passionless—they were while their author lived; they have grown classic by that touch of death which stopped the generous heart and teeming fancy of their fated author. They have no more influence on living opinion, than that world of beauty to which Shelley adverts, when he exclaims in "Hellas,"

> But Greece and her foundations are
> Built below the tide of war,
> Based on the crystalline sea
> Of thought and its eternity.

Having considered this charge chiefly as affecting poetry, I must not forget that the last passage selected by the Prosecutor is in prose, culled from the essay which was appended to the poem of "Queen Mab," disclaimed by the editor—disclaimed by Shelley long before he reached the prime of manhood—but rightly preserved, shocking as it is in itself, as essential to the just contemplation of his moral and intellectual nature. They form the dark ground of a picture of surpassing interest to the philosopher. There shall you see a poet whose fancies are most ethereal, struggling with a theory gross, material, shallow, imaging the great struggle by which the Spirit of the Eternal seeks to subdue the material world to its uses. His genius was pent up within the hard and bitter rind of his philosophy, as Ariel was in the rift of the cloven pine; and what wonder if a Spirit thus enthralled should send forth strange and discordant cries? Because the words which those strange voices syllabled are recorded here, will you say the record is a crime? I recollect in the speech of that great ornament of our profession, Mr. Erskine, an illustration of the injustice of selecting part of a conversation or of a book, and because singly considered it is shocking, charging a criminal intent on the utterer or the publisher; which, if, at first, it may not seem applicable to this case, will be found essentially to govern it. He refers to the passage in the Bible, "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God,*" and shows how the publisher of the Book of God itself might be charged with atheism, by the insertion only of the latter division of the sentence. It is not surely by the division of a sentence only that the context may be judged; but by the general intent of him who publishes what is in itself offensive, for the purpose of curious record—of controversy—of evidence—of example. The publisher of Shelley has not indeed said "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God;" but he has in effect said, The poet has tried to say with his lips "There is no God," but his genius and his heart belie his words! What indeed does the publisher of Shelley's works virtually say, where he thus presents to his readers this record of the poet's life and death? He says—Behold! Here is a spectacle which angels may admire and weep over! Here is a poet of fancy the most ethereal—feelings the most devout—charity the most Christian—enthralled by opinions the most cold, hollow, and debasing! Here is a youth endowed with that sensibility to the beautiful and the grand which peoples his minutes with the perceptions of years—who, with a spirit of self-sacrifice which the eldest Christianity might exult in if found in one of its martyrs, is ready to lay down that intellectual being—to be lost in loss itself—if by annihilation he could multiply the enjoyments and hasten the progress of his species—and yet, with strange wilfulness, rejecting that religion in form to which in essence he is imperishably allied! Observe these radiant fancies—pure and cold as frostwork—how would they be kindled by the warmth of Christian love! Track those "thoughts that wander through eternity," and think how they would repose in their proper home! And trace the inspired, yet erring youth, poem after poem—year after year, month after month—how shall you see the icy fetters which encircle his genius gradually dissolve; the wreaths of mist ascend from his path; and the distance spread out before him peopled with human affections, and skirted by angel wings! See how this seeming atheist begins to adore—how the divine image of suffering and love presented at Calvary, never unfelt, begins to be seen—and in its contemplation the softened, not yet convinced poet exclaims, in his Prometheus, of the followers of Christ—

> The wise, the pure, the lofty, and the just,
> Whom thy slaves hate—*for being like to thee!*

And thus he proceeds—with light shining more and more towards the perfect day, which he was not permitted to realize in this world. As you trace this progress, alas! Death veils it—veils it, not stops it—and this perturbed, imperfect, but glorious being is hidden from us—"Till the sea shall give up its dead!" What say you now to the book which exhibits this spectacle, and stops with this catastrophe? Is it a libel on religion and God? Talk of proofs of Divine existence in the wonders of the material universe, there is nothing in any—nor in all—compared to the proof which this indicted volume conveys? What can the telescope disclose of worlds and suns and systems in the heavens above us, or the microscope detect in the descending scale of various life, endowed with a speech and a language like that with which Shelley, being dead, here speaks? Not even do the most serene productions of poets, whose faculties in this world have attained comparative harmony—strongly as they plead for the immortality of the mind which produced them—afford so unanswerable a proof of a life to come, as the mighty embryo which this book exhibits;—as the course, the frailty, the imperfection, with the dark curtain dropped on all! It is, indeed, when best surveyed, but the infancy of an eternal being; an infancy wayward but gigantic; an infancy which we shall never fully understand, till we behold its development "when time shall be no more"—when doubt shall be dissolved in vision—"when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and when this mortal shall have put on immortality!"

Let me, before I sit down, entreat you to ask yourselves where the course of prosecution will stop if you crown with success Mr. Hetherington's revenge. Revenge, did I say? I recall the word. Revenge means the returning of injury for injury—an emotion most unwise and unchristian, but still human;—the satisfaction of a feeling of ill-regulated justice cherished by a heart which judges bitterly in its own cause. But this attempt to retaliate on one who is a stranger to the evil suffered—this infliction of misery for doing that which the prosecutor has maintained within these works the right of all men to do—has no claim to the savage plea of wild justice; but is poor, cruel, paltry injustice; as bare of excuse as ever tyrant, above or below the opinion of the wise and good, ever ventured to threaten. Admit its power in this case—grant its right to select for the punishment of blasphemy the exhibition of an anomaly as harmless as the stuffed aspic in a museum, or as its image on the passionless bosom of a pictured Cleopatra—and what ancient, what modern history, shall be lent unchallenged to our friends? If the thousand booksellers who sell the "Paradise Lost"—from the greatest publisher in London or Edinburgh down to the proprietor of the little book-stall, where the poor wayfarer snatches a hasty glance at the grandeur and beauty of the poet, and goes on his way refreshed—may hope that genius will render to the name of Milton what they deny to that of Shelley; what can they who sell "The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" hope from the prosecutor of "Queen Mab?" In that work are two celebrated chapters, sparkling with all the meretricious felicities of epigrammatic style, which, full of polished sarcasm against infant Christianity, are elaborately directed to wither the fame of its Martyrs and Confessors with bitterest scorn—two chapters which, if published at a penny each, would do more mischief than thousands of metaphysical poems; but which, retained in their apppropriate place, to be sought only by the readers of history, may serve the cause of truth by proving the poverty of the spite by which it has been assailed, and find ample counterpoise in the sequel. The possibility that this history should be suppressed by some descendant of Gibbon, who might extravagantly suppose it his duty to stifle cold and crafty sneers aimed at the first followers of Christ, was urged—and urged with success—against me when I pleaded for the right of those descendants to the fruits of the labours of their ancestor; yet, if you sanction this attempt, any Hetherington may compel by law that suppression, the remote possibility of which has been accepted as a reason for denying to the posterity of the author a property in the work he has created! This work, invested with the peculiar interest which belongs to the picture of waning greatness, has recently been printed in a cheap form, under the sanction of a dignitary of the Established Church—a Christian Poet of the noblest aim—whose early genius was the pride of our fairest university, and who is now the honoured minister of the very parish in which we are assembled. If I were now defending Mr. Milman, of whose friendship I am justly proud, for this last and cheapest and best edition of Gibbon, I could only resort to the arguments I am now urging for Mr. Moxon, and claim the benefit of the same distinction between the tendency of a book adapted to the promotion of infidelity, and one which, *containing* incidental matter of offence, is commended to the student with those silent guards which its form and accompaniments supply. True it is that Mr. Milman has accompanied the text with notes in which he sometimes explains or counteracts the insinuations of the author; but what Notes can be so effectual as that which follows "Queen Mab"—in which Shelley's own letter is set forth, stating, on his authority, that the work was immature, and that he did not intend it for the general eye? Is not the publication of this letter by the publisher as decisive of his motive—not to commend the wild fancies and stormy words of the young poet to the reader's approval, but to give them as part of his biography,—as the notes of Mr. Milman are of that which no one doubts, his desire to make the perusal of Gibbon healthful? Prosper this attempt, and what a field of speculative prosecution will open before us! Every publisher of the works of Rousseau, of Voltaire, of Volney, of Hume—of the Classics and of their Translations—works regarded as innoxious, because presented in a certain aspect and offered to a certain class, will become liable to every publisher of penny blasphemy who may suffer or hate or fear the law;—nor of such only, but of every small attorney in search of practice, who may find in the machinery of the Crown-office the facilities of extortion. Nor will the unjust principle you are asked to sanction stop with retaliation in the case of alleged blasphemy—the retailer of cheap lasciviousness, if checked in his wicked trade, will have *his* revenge against the works of the mighty dead in which some tinge of mortal stain may unfortunately be detected. The printer of one of those penny atrocities which are thrust into the hands of ingenuous youths when bound on duty or innocent pleasure, the emissaries of which—children often themselves—mount the chariot and board the steamboat to scatter that poison which may infect the soul as long as the soul shall endure—whom, to do this prosecutor justice, I know he disclaims—may obtain true bills of indictment against any man, who has sold Horace, or Virgil, or Lucretius, or Ovid, or Juvenal—against all who have sold a copy of any of our old dramatists—and thus not only Congreve, and Farquhar, and Wycherley, but Fletcher, and Massinger, and Ford, and Webster, and Ben Jonson; nay, with reverence be it spoken, even Shakspeare, though ever pure in essence, may be placed at the mercy of an insect abuser of the press—unless juries have the courage and the virtue to recognise the distinction between a man who publishes works which are infidel or impure, *because* they are infidel or impure, and publishes them in a form and at a price which indicate the desire that they should work out mischief, and one who publishes works in which evil of the same kind may be found, but who publishes them because, in spite of that imperfection, they are on the whole for the edification and delight of mankind;—between one who tenders the mischief for approbation, and one who exposes it for example. And are you prepared to succumb to this new censorship? Will you allow Mr. Hetherington to prescribe what leaves you shall tear from the classic volumes in your libraries? Shall he dictate to you how much of Lord Byron—a writer far more influential than Shelley—you shall be allowed to lend to your friends without fear of his censure? Shall he drag into court the vast productions of the German mind, and ask juries to decide whether the translator of Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and Lessing—dealing with sacred things with a boldness to which we are unused—are guilty of crime? Shall he call for judgment on that stupendous work, the "Faust," with its prologue in Heaven, which has been presented by my friend Mr. Hayward, whose able assistance I have to-day, with happy vividness to English readers—and ask a jury to take it in their hand, and at an hour's glance to decide whether it is a libel on God, or a hymn by Genius to His praise? Do you not feel those matters are for other seasons—for another sphere?—If so, will you, in the dark—without knowledge—without evidence—sanction a prosecution which will, in its result, impose new and strange tasks on juries who may decide on other trials; which may destroy the just allowance accorded to learning even under absolute monarchies; and place every man who hereafter shall print, or sell, or give, or lend, any one of a thousand volumes sanctioned by ages, at the mercy of any Prosecutor who for malice—for gain—or mere mischief, may choose to denounce him as a blasphemer?

And now, I commend into your hands the cause of the defendant—the cause of genius—the cause of learning—the cause of history—the cause of thought. I have not sought to maintain it by assailing the law as it has been expounded by courts, and administered by juries; which, if altered, should be changed by the authority of the legislature, and neither by the violation of oaths, nor by the machinery which the prosecutor has employed to render it odious at the cost of those whom he himself contends to be guiltless; but I have striven to convince you, that by a just application of that law, you may hold this publication of the works of Shelley to be no crime. It has been fairly conceded that Mr. Moxon is a most respectable publisher; one who has done good service to the cause of poetry and wisdom; and one who could not intentionally publish a blasphemous work, without treason to all the associations which honour his life. Beginning his career under the auspices of Rogers, the eldest of a great age of poets, and blessed with the continued support of that excellent person, who never broke by one unworthy line the charm of moral grace which pervades his works, he has been associated with Lamb, whose kindness embraced all sects, all parties, all classes, and whose genius shed new and pleasant lights on daily life; with Southey, the pure and childlike in heart; with Coleridge, in the light of whose Christian philosophy these indicted poems would assume their true character as mournful, yet salutary specimens of power developed imperfectly in this world; and with Wordsworth, whose works so long neglected or scorned, but so long silently nurturing tastes for the lofty and the pure, it has been Mr. Moxon's privilege to diffuse largely throughout this and other lands, and with them the sympathies which link the human heart to nature and to God, and all classes of mankind to each other! Reject then, in your justice, the charge which imputes to such a man, that by publishing this book, he has been guilty of blasphemy against the God whom he reveres! Refuse to set the fatal precedent, which will not only draw the fame of the illustrious dead into question before juries, without time to investigate their merits; which may not only harass the first publishers of these works; but which will beset the course of every bookseller, every librarian, throughout the country, with perpetual snares, and make our criminal courts the arenas for a savage warfare of literary prosecutions! Protect our noble literature from the alternative of being either corrupted or enslaved! Terminate those anxieties which this charge, so unprovoked—so undeserved—has now for months inflicted on the defendant, and his friends, by that verdict of *Not Guilty*, which will disappoint only those who desire that cheap blasphemy should have free course; which the noblest, and purest, and most pious of your own generation will rejoice in; and for which their posterity will honour and bless you!

SPEECH ON THE MOTION FOR LEAVE TO BRING IN A BILL TO AMEND THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, MAY 18, 1837.

Mr. Speaker,—In venturing to invite the attention of the House to the state of the law affecting the property of men of letters in the results of their genius and industry, I feel that it is my duty to present their case as concisely as its nature will permit. While I believe that their claims to some share in the consideration of the legislature will not be denied, I am aware that they appeal to feelings far different from those which are usually excited by the intellectual conflicts of this place; that the interest of their claim is not of that stirring kind which belongs to the busy present, but reflects back on the past, of which the passions are now silent, and stretches forward with speculation into the visionary future; and that the circumstances which impede their efforts and frustrate their reward, are best appreciated in the calmness of thought to which those efforts are akin. I shall therefore intrude as briefly as I can on the patience of the House, while I glance at the history of the evils of which they complain; suggest the principles on which I think them entitled to redress; and state the outlines of the remedies by which I propose to relieve them.

It is, indeed, time that literature should experience some of the blessings of legislation; for hitherto, with the exception of the noble boon conferred on the acted drama by the bill of my honourable friend the member for Lincoln, it has received scarcely any thing but evil. If we should now simply repeal all the statutes which have been passed under the guise of encouraging learning, and leave it to be protected only by the principles of the common law, and the remedies which the common law could supply, I believe the relief would be welcome. It did not occur to our ancestors, that the right of deriving solid benefits from that which springs solely from within us—the right of property in that which the mind itself creates, and which, so far from exhausting the materials common to all men, or limiting their resources, enriches and expands them—a right of property which, by the happy peculiarity of its nature, can only be enjoyed by the proprietor in proportion as it blesses mankind—should be exempted from the protection which is extended to the ancient appropriation of the soil, and the rewards of commercial enterprise. By the common law of England, as solemnly expounded by a majority of seven to four of the judges in the case of "Donaldson *v.* Beckett," and as sustained by the additional opinion of Lord Mansfield, the author of an original wor had FOR EVER the sole right of multiplying copies, and a remedy by action, incident to every right, against any one who should infringe it. The jurisdiction of the Star Chamber, while it restrained the freedom of the press, at the same time incidentally preserved the copyright from violation; and this was one of the pleas urged for the power of licensing; for Milton, in his immortal pleading for unlicensed printing, states, as one of the glosses of his opponents, "the just retaining by each man of his several copy, which God forbid should be gainsaid." In the special verdict in "Miller *v.* Taylor," (1769,) it was found as a fact, "that before the reign of Queen Anne, it was usual to purchase from authors the perpetual copyright of their books, and to assign the same from hand to hand for valuable considerations, and to make them the subject of family settlements." In truth, the claim of the author to perpetual copyright was never disputed, until literature had received a fatal present in the first act of parliament "For its encouragement"—the 8th Anne, c. 19, passed in 1709; in which the mischief lurked, unsuspected, for many years before it was called into action to limit the rights it professed, and it was probably intended, to secure. By that act, the sole right of printing and reprinting their works was recognised in authors for the term of fourteen years, and, if they should be living at its close, for another period of the same duration,—and piracy was made punishable during those periods by the forfeiture of the books illegally published, and of a penny for every sheet in the offender's custody—one-half to the use of the queen's majesty—the other halfpenny, not to the poor author, whose poverty the sum might seem to befit, but to the informer; and the condition of enjoying these summary remedies, was the entry of the work at Stationers' Hall. This act, "For the encouragement of learning," which, like the priest in the fable, while it vouchsafes the blessing denies the farthing, also confers a power on the Archbishop of Canterbury and other great functionaries to regulate the prices of books, which was rejected by the Lords, restored on conference with the Commons, and repealed in the following reign; and also confers on learning the benefit of a forced contribution of nine copies of every work, on the best paper, for the use of certain libraries. Except in this last particular, the act seems to have remained a dead letter down to the year 1760, no one, as far as I can trace, having thought it worth while to sue for its halfpennies, and no one having suggested that its effect had been silently to restrict the common-law right of authors to the term during which its remedies were to operate. So far was this construction from being suspected, that in this interval of fifty years the Court of Chancery repeatedly interfered by injunction to restrain the piracy of books in which the statutable copyright had long expired. This protection was extended in 1735 to "The Whole Duty of Man," the first assignment of which had been made seventy-eight years before; in the same year to the "Miscellanies of Pope and Swift;" in 1736 to "Nelson's Festivals and Fasts;" in 1739 to the "Paradise Lost;" and in 1752 to the same poem, with a life of the author, and the notes of all preceding editions. Some doubts having at length arisen, the question of the operation of the statute was, in 1760, raised by a sort of amicable suit, "Tonson *v.* Collins," respecting the "Spectator," in which the Court of Common Pleas inclined to the plaintiff, but before giving judgment discovered that the proceeding was collusive, and refused to pronounce any decision. In 1766 an action was brought, "Miller *v.* Taylor," for pirating "Thomson's Seasons," in the Court of King's Bench, before whom it was elaborately argued, and which, in 1769, gave judgment in favour of the subsisting copyright; Lord Mansfield, Mr. Justice Willes, and Mr. Justice Aston, holding that copyright was perpetual by the common law, and not limited by the statute, except as to penalties, and Mr. Justice Yates dissenting from them. In 1774 the question was brought before the House of Lords, when eleven judges delivered their opinions upon it—six of whom thought the copyright limited, while five held it perpetual; and Lord Mansfield, who would have made the numbers equal, retaining his opinion, but expressing none. By this bare majority—against the strong opinion of the chief justice of England—was it decided that the statute of Anne has substituted a short term in copyright for an estate in fee, and the rights of authors were delivered up to the mercy of succeeding parliaments!

Until this decision, the copyright vested in the universities had only shared the protection which it was supposed had existed for all, and in fact their copyright was gone. But they immediately resorted to the legislature and obtained an act, 15 George III., c. 63, "For enabling the two universities in England, the four universities of Scotland, and the several colleges of Eton, Westminster, and Winchester, to hold in perpetuity the copyright in books given or bequeathed to them for the advancement of learning and the purposes of education; and the like privilege was, by 41 George III., c. 107, extended to Trinity College, Dublin. With the immunities thus conferred on the universities, or rather with this exemption from the wrong incidentally inflicted on individuals, I have no intention to interfere; neither do I seek to relieve literature from the obligation, recently lightened by the just consideration of parliament, of supplying the principal universities with copies of all works at the author's charge. I only seek to apply the terms of the statute, which recites that the purposes of those who bequeathed copyright to the universities for the advancement of learning would be frustrated unless the exclusive right of printing and reprinting such books be secured in perpetuity, to support the claim of individuals to some extended interest in their own. I only ask that some of the benefits enjoyed by the venerable nurseries of learning and of genius should attend the works of those whose youth they have inspired and fostered, and of those also who, although fortune has denied to them that inestimable blessing, look with reverence upon the great institutions of their country, and feel themselves in that reverence not wholly strangers to the great body of associations they nourish.

The next act, 41 George III., c. 107, passed immediately after the Union, did little besides including Ireland in the general law of copyright; conferring on Trinity College, Dublin, the privilege of English universities; prohibiting the importation of books from abroad which had been originally printed in the United Kingdom; and increasing the penalty on piracies from 1d. to 3d. per sheet. But in the year 1814, by the statute of 54 George III., c. 156, which is the principal subsisting act on the subject of literary copyright, reciting "That it would afford further encouragement to literature, if the duration of copyright were further extended," enlarges it to the absolute term of twenty-eight years; and if the author shall survive that time, secures it to him for the remainder of his life. Since then the legislature has extended its protection to two classes of composition which before were left in a condition to invite piracy—to the actual drama, by the measure of 3 William IV., c. 15, and to lectures, by 5 and 6 William IV., c. 65—and has, by an act of last session, lightened the load of one of the blessings conferred by the legislature, by reducing the copies which authors are privileged to render to five; but the term of twenty-eight years, with the possible reversion beyond that time for life, is all authors have yet obtained in return for that inheritance of which the statute of Anne incidentally deprived them.

This limitation of the ancient rights of authorship has not been compensated by uniformity in the details of the law, by simplicity in the modes of proving the right or of transferring it, or by the cheapness or adequacy of the remedies. The penal clauses have proved wholly worthless. Engravings, etchings, maps, and charts, which are regulated by other statutes, are secured to the author for twenty-eight years, but not, like books, for the contingent term of life. Instead of the registration at Stationers' Hall, which has been holden not necessary to the right of action, the work must bear the date and the name of the proprietor; but no provision is made in either case for cheap transfer. Now, I propose to render the law of copyright uniform, as to all books and works of art; to secure to the proprietor the same term in each; to give one plan of registration and one mode of transfer. As the stationer's company have long enjoyed the control over the registration of books, I do not propose to take it from them, if they are willing to retain it with the increased trouble, compensated by the increased fees which their officer will be entitled to receive. I propose that, before any proceeding can be adopted for the violation of copyright, the author, or his assignee, shall deposit a copy of the work, whether book or engraving, and cause an entry to be made in the form to be given in the act of the proprietorship of the work, whether absolute or limited; and that a copy of such entry, signed by the officer, shall be admitted in all courts as *primâ facie* evidence of the property. I propose that any transfer should be registered in like manner in a form also to be given by the act; that such transfer shall be proved by a similar copy; and that in neither case shall any stamp be requisite.

At present great uncertainty prevails as to the original right of property in papers supplied to periodical works or written at the instance of a bookseller, and as to the right of engraving from original pictures. However desirable it may be that these questions should be settled, it is impossible to interfere with the existing relations of booksellers and authors, or of patrons of art and artists. Neither, for the future, do I propose to lay down any rule as to the rights which shall originally be expressed or implied between the parties themselves; but that the right of copy shall be registered as to such books, pictures or engravings, only with the consent of both expressed in writing, and when this is done shall be absolute in the party registered as owner. At present, an engraver or publisher, who has given a large sum for permission to engrave a picture, and expended his money or labour in the plate, may be met by unexcepted competition, for which he has no remedy. By making the registration not the condition of the right itself, but of the remedy by action or otherwise, the independence of contracting parties will be preserved, and this evil avoided for the future. A competent tribunal will still be wanting; its establishment is beyond the scope of my intention or my power; but I feel that complete justice will not be done to Literature and Art until a mode shall be devised for a cheap and summary vindication of their injuries before some parties better qualified to determine it than judges who have passed their lives in the laborious study of the law, or jurors who are surrounded with the cares of business, and, except by accident, little acquainted with the subjects presented to them for decision.

But the main object of the bill which I contemplate is—I will not use those words of ill omen, "the further advancement of learning," but—for additional justice to learning, by the further extension of time during which authors shall enjoy the direct pecuniary benefit immediately flowing from the sale of their own works.

Although I see no reason why authors should not be restored to that inheritance which, under the name of protection and encouragement, has been taken from them, I feel that the subject has so long been treated as matter of compromise between those who deny that the creations of the inventive faculty, or the achievements of reason, are the subjects of property at all, and those who think the property should last as long as the works which contain truth and beauty live, that I propose still to treat it on the principle of compromise, and to rest satisfied with a fairer adjustment of the difference than the last Act of Parliament affords. I shall propose—subject to modification when the details of the measure shall be discussed—that the term of property in all works of learning, genius, and art, to be produced hereafter, or in which the statutable copyright now subsists, shall be extended to sixty years, to be computed from the death of the author; which will at least enable him, while providing for the instruction and the delight of distant ages, to contemplate that he shall leave in his works themselves some legacy to those for whom a nearer, if not a higher duty, requires him to provide, and which shall make "death less terrible." When the opponents of literary property speak of glory as the reward of genius, they make an ungenerous use of the very nobleness of its impulses, and show how little they have profited by its high example. When Milton, in poverty and in blindness, fed the flame of his divine enthusiasm by the assurance of a duration coequal with his language, I believe with Lord Camden that no thought crossed him of the wealth which might be amassed by the sale of his poem; but surely some shadow would have been cast upon "the clear dream and solemn vision" of his future glories, had he foreseen that, while booksellers were striving to rival each other in the magnificence of their editions, or their adaptation to the convenience of various classes of his admirers, his only surviving descendant—a woman—should be rescued from abject want only by the charity of Garrick, who, at the solicitation of Dr. Johnson, gave her a benefit at the theatre which had appropriated to itself all that could be represented of Comus. The liberality of genius is surely ill urged as an excuse for our ungrateful denial of its rights. The late Mr. Coleridge gave an example not merely of its liberality, but of its profuseness; while he sought not even to appropriate to his fame the vast intellectual treasures which he had derived from boundless research, and coloured by a glorious imagination; while he scattered abroad the seeds of beauty and of wisdom to take root in congenial minds, and was content to witness their fruits in the productions of those who heard him. But ought we, therefore, the less to deplore, now when the music of his divine philosophy is for ever hushed, that the earlier portion of those works on which he stamped his own impress—all which he desired of the world that it should recognise as his—is published for the gain of others than his children—that his death is illustrated by the forfeiture of their birthright? What justice is there in this? Do we reward our heroes thus? Did we tell our Marlboroughs, our Nelsons, our Wellingtons, that glory was their reward, that they fought for posterity, and that posterity would pay them? We leave them to no such cold and uncertain requital; we do not even leave them merely to enjoy the spoils of their victories, which we deny to the author; we concentrate a nation's honest feeling of gratitude and pride into the form of an endowment, and teach other ages what we thought, and what they ought to think, of their deeds, by the substantial memorials of our praise. Were our Shakspeare and Milton less the ornaments of their country, less the benefactors of mankind? Would the example be less inspiring if we permitted them to enjoy the spoils of their peaceful victories—if we allowed to their descendants, not the tax assessed by present gratitude, and charged on the Future, but the mere amount which that Future would be delighted to pay—extending as the circle of their glory expands, and rendered only by those who individually reap the benefits, and are contented at once to enjoy and to reward its author?

But I do not press these considerations to the full extent; the Past is beyond our power, and I only ask for the present a brief reversion in the Future. "Riches fineless" created by the mighty dead are already ours. It is in truth the greatness of blessings which the world inherits from genius that dazzles the mind on this question; and the habit of repaying its bounty by words, that confuses us and indisposes us to justice. It is because the spoils of time are freely and irrevocably ours—because the forms of antique beauty wear for us the bloom of an imperishable youth—because the elder literature of our own country is a free mine of wealth to the bookseller and of delight to ourselves, that we are unable to understand the claim of our contemporaries to a beneficial interest in their works. Because genius by a genial necessity communicates so much, we cannot conceive it as retaining any thing for its possessor. There is a sense, indeed, in which the poets "on earth have made us heirs of truth and pure delight in heavenly lays;" and it is because of the greatness of this very boon—because their thoughts become our thoughts, and their phrases unconsciously enrich our daily language—because their works, harmonious by the law of their own nature, suggest to us the rules of composition by which their imitators should be guided—because to them we can resort, and "in our golden urns draw light," that we cannot fancy them apart from ourselves, or admit that they have any property except in our praise. And our gratitude is shown not only in leaving their descendants without portion in the pecuniary benefits derived from their works, but in permitting their fame to be frittered away in abridgments, and polluted by base intermixtures, and denying to their children even the cold privilege of watching over and protecting it!

There is something, sir, peculiarly unjust in bounding the term of an author's property by his natural life, if he should survive so short a period as twenty-eight years. It denies to age and experience the probable reward it permits to youth—to youth, sufficiently full of hope and joy, to slight his promises. It gives a bounty to haste, and informs the laborious student, who would wear away his strength to complete some work which "the world will not willingly let die," that the more of his life he devotes to its perfection, the more limited shall be his interest in its fruits. It stops the progress of remuneration at the moment it is most needed, and when the benignity of Nature would extract from her last calamity a means of support and comfort to survivors. At the season when the author's name is invested with the solemn interest of mortality—when his eccentricities or frailties excite a smile or a sneer no longer—when the last seal is set upon his earthly course, and his works assume their place among the classics of his country, your law declares that his works shall become your property, and you requite him by seizing the patrimony of his children. We blame the errors and excesses of genius, and we leave them—justly leave them—for the most part, to the consequences of their strangely blended nature. But if genius, in assertion of its diviner alliances, produces large returns when the earthly course of its frail possessor is past, why is the public to insult his descendants with their alms and their pity? What right have we to moralize over the excesses of a Burns, and insult his memory by charitable honours, while we are taking the benefit of his premature death, in the expiration of his copyright and the vaunted cheapness of his works? Or, to advert to a case in which the highest intellectual powers were associated with the noblest moral excellence, what right have we to take credit to ourselves for a paltry and ineffectual subscription to rescue Abbotsford for the family of its great author, (Abbotsford, his romance in stone and mortar, but not more individually *his* than those hundred fabrics, not made with hands, which he has raised, and peopled for the delight of mankind,) while we insist on appropriating now the profits of his earlier poems, and anticipate the time when, in a few years, his novels will be ours without rent-charge to enjoy—and any one's to copy, to emasculate, and to garble? This is the case of one whom kings and people delighted to honour. But look on another picture—that of a man of genius and integrity, who has received all the insult and injury from his contemporaries, and obtains nothing from posterity but a name. Look at Daniel De Foe; recollect him pilloried, bankrupt, wearing away his life to pay his creditors in full, and dying in the struggle!—and his works live, imitated, corrupted, yet casting off the stains, not by protection of law, but by their own pure essence. Had every school-boy, whose young imagination has been prompted by his great work, and whose heart has learned to throb in the strange, yet familiar, solitude he created, given even the halfpenny of the statute of Anne, there would have been no want of a provision for his children, no need of a subscription for a statue to his memory!

The term allowed by the existing law is curiously adapted to encourage the lightest works, and to leave the noblest unprotected. Its little span is ample for authors who seek only to amuse; who, "to beguile the time, look like the time;" who lend to frivolity or corruption "lighter wings to fly;" who sparkle, blaze, and expire. These may delight for a season—glisten as the fire-flies on the heaving sea of public opinion—the airy proofs of the intellectual activity of the age;—yet surely it is not just to legislate for those alone, and deny all reward to that literature which aspires to endure. Let us suppose an author, of true original genius, disgusted with the inane phraseology which had usurped the place of poetry, and devoting himself from youth to its service; disdaining the gauds which attract the careless, and unskilled in the moving accidents of fortune—not seeking his triumph in the tempest of the passions, but in the serenity which lies above them—whose works shall be scoffed at—whose name made a by-word—and yet who shall persevere in his high and holy course, gradually impressing thoughtful minds with the sense of truth made visible in the severest forms of beauty, until he shall create the taste by which he shall be appreciated—influence, one after another, the master-spirits of his age—be felt pervading every part of the national literature, softening, raising, and enriching it; and when at last he shall find his confidence in his own aspirations justified, and the name which once was the scorn admitted to be the glory of his age—he shall look forward to the close of his earthly career, as the event that shall consecrate his fame and deprive his children of the opening harvest he is beginning to reap. As soon as his copyright becomes valuab'e, it is gone! This is no imaginary case—I refer to one who "in this setting part of time" has opened a vein of the deepest sentiment and thought before unknown—who has supplied the noblest antidote to the freezing effects of the scientific spirit of the age—who, while he has detected that poetry which is the essence of the greatest things, has cast a glory around the lowliest conditions of humanity, and traced out the subtle links by which they are connected with the highest—of one whose name will now find an echo, not only in the heart of the secluded student, but in that of the busiest of those who are fevered by political controversy—of William Wordsworth. Ought we not to requite such a poet, while yet we may, for the injustice of our boyhood? For those works which are now insensibly quoted by our most popular writers, the spirit of which now mingles with our intellectual atmosphere, he probably has not received through the long life he has devoted to his art, until lately, as much as the same labour, with moderate talent, might justly produce in a single year. Shall the law, whose term has been amply sufficient to his scorners, now afford him no protection, because he has outlasted their scoffs—because his fame has been fostered amidst the storms, and is now the growth of years?

There is only one other consideration to which I will advert, as connected with this subject—the expedience and justice of acknowledging the rights of foreigners to copyright in this country, and of claiming it from them for ourselves in return. If at this time it were clear that our law afforded no protection to foreigners, first publishing in other countries, there would be great difficulty in dealing with this question for ourselves, and we might feel bound to leave it to negotiation to give and to obtain reciprocal benefits. But if a recent decision on the subject of musical copyright is to be regarded as correct, the principle of international copyright is already acknowledged here, and there is little for us to do in order that we may be enabled to claim its recognition from foreign states. It has been decided by a judge conversant with the business and with the elegancies of life to a degree unusual with an eminent lawyer—by one who was the most successful advocate of his time, yet who was not more remarkable for his skill in dealing with facts than for the grace with which he embellished them—by Lord Abinger—that the assignee of foreign copyright, deriving title from the author abroad to publish in this country, and creating that right within a reasonable time, may claim the protection of our courts against any infringement of his copy.* If this is law—and I believe and trust it is—we shall make no sacrifice in so declaring it, and in setting an example which France, Prussia, America, and Germany, are prepared to follow. Let us do justice to our law and to ourselves. At present, not only is the literary intercourse of countries, who should form one great family, degraded into a low series of mutual piracies—not only are industry and talent deprived of their just reward, but our literature is debased in the eyes of the world, by the wretched medium through which they behold it. Pilfered, and disfigured in the pilfering, the noblest images are broken, wit falls pointless, and verse is only felt in fragments of broken music;—sad fate for an irritable race! The great minds of our time have now an audience to impress far vaster than it entered into the minds of their predecessors to hope for; an audience increasing as population thickens in the cities of America, and spreads itself out through its diminishing wilds, who speak our language, and who look on our old poets as their own immortal ancestry. And if this our literature shall be theirs; if its diffusion shall follow the efforts of the stout heart and sturdy arm in their triumph over the obstacles of nature; if the woods, stretching beyond their confines, shall be haunted with visions of beauty which our poets have created; let those who thus are softening the ruggedness of young society have some present interest about which affection may gather, and at least let them be protected from those who would exhibit them mangled or corrupted to their transatlantic disciples. I do not in truth ask for literature favour; I do not ask for it charity; I do not even appeal to gratitude in its behalf; but I ask for it a portion, and but a portion, of that common justice which the coarsest industry obtains for its natural reward, and which nothing but the very extent of its claims, and the nobleness of the associations to which they are akin, have prevented it from receiving from our laws.

Sir, I will trespass no longer on the patience of the house, for which I am most grateful, but move that leave be given to bring in a bill "to consolidate and amend the laws relating to property in the nature of copyright in books, musical compositions, acted dramas, pictures, and engravings, to provide remedies for the violation thereof, and to extend the term of its duration."

The motion, seconded by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and supported by Sir Robert Harry Inglis, was carried without opposition; and the bill was ordered to be brought in by Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Lord Mahon, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in conjunction with the mover. The bill which under these auspices was introduced, contained, according to the proposition, clauses for the protection of the arts of painting and engraving, and provided for the recognition and security of copyright in the works of foreign authors, on certain conditions. Its second reading was carried without debate or division; and it stood for committal when the death of the king precluded the further progress of all measures except those of urgency, and in a few weeks produced the dissolution of parliament. On the 14th December 1838, the motion for leave to introduce the bill was renewed—with the difference that it has been found expedient to confine the measure to literature, and to defer until a suitable opportunity the introduction of a separate measure for consolidating and amending the laws affecting the arts of painting, engraving, and also that of sculpture, which had not been included in the original measure. This separation of the objects of the bill received the approbation of Lord Mahon, who had previously concurred in its necessity, and of Sir Robert Peel, who suggested the expedience of appointing a select committee to report on the state of the law relating to the fine arts, before proceeding to the arduous but most needful work of legislating for their protection, and securing their reward. On this occasion, also, that part of the original measure which related to international copyright was, at the request of Mr. Poulett Thomson, resigned into the hands of ministers, under whose auspices a bill has since passed, enabling them to negotiate on this important subject with foreign powers. After expressions of approval from Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer and Mr. D'Israeli, leave was given to bring in the bill. The circumstances and character of the opposition which had, in the interval, been raised against it, sufficiently appear from the following speech on the motion that it be read a second time.

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* D'Almaine and another *v.* Bossey, 1 Younge and Collyer's Reports, 288.

This case has been since overruled by that of Chappell *v.* Purday, in which the Court of Exchequer decided that a foreigner has no copyright in a work first published abroad.

SPEECH ON THE MOTION FOR THE SECOND READING OF THE BILL TO AMEND THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 1838.

MR. SPEAKER,—When I had the honour last year to move the second reading of a bill essentially similar to the present, I found it unnecessary to trouble the house with a single remark; for scarcely a trace then appeared of the opposition which has since gathered around it. I do not, however, regret that the measure was not carried through the legislature by the current of feeling which then prevailed in its favour, but that opportunity has been afforded for the full discussion of the claims on which it is founded, and of the consequences to individuals and to the public that may be expected from its operation. Believing, as I do, that the interests of those who, by intellectual power, laboriously and virtuously exerted, contribute to the delight and instruction of mankind—of those engaged in the mechanical processes by which those labours are made effectual—and of the people who at once enjoy and reward them, are essentially one; believing that it is impossible at the same time to enhance the reward of authors, and to injure those who derive their means of subsistence from them—and desiring only that this bill shall succeed if it shall be found, on the fullest discussion, that it will serve the cause of intellect in its noblest and most expanded sense; I rejoice that all classes who are interested in reality or in belief in the proposed change have had the means of presenting their statements and their reasonings to the consideration of Parliament, and of urging them with all the zeal which an apprehension of pecuniary loss can inspire. I do not, indeed, disguise that the main and direct object of the bill is to insure to authors of the highest and most enduring merit a larger share in the fruits of their own industry and genius than our law now accords to them; and whatever fate may attend the endeavour, I feel with satisfaction that it is the first which has been made substantially for the benefit of authors, and sustained by no interest except that which the appeal on their behalf to the gratitude of those whose minds they have enriched, and whose lives they have gladdened, has enkindled. The statutes of Anne and of George III., especially the last, were measures suggested and maintained by publishers; and it must be consoling to the silent toilers after fame, who in this country have no ascertained rank, no civil distinction, in their hours of weariness and anxiety to feel that their claim to consideration has been cheerfully recognised by Parliament, and that their cause, however feebly presented, has been regarded with respect and with sympathy.

In order that I may trespass as briefly as I can on the indulgence with which this subject has been treated, I will attempt to narrow the controversy of to-night by stating at once what I regard to be the principle of this bill, and call on honourable members now to affirm—and what I regard as matters of mere detail, which it is unnecessary at this moment to consider. That principle is, that the present term of copyright is much too short for the attainment of that justice which society owes to authors, especially to those (few though they be) whose reputation is of slow growth and of enduring character. Whether that term shall be extended from its present length to sixty years, or to some intermediate period—whether it shall commence at the death of the author or at the date of first publication—in what manner it shall be reckoned in the cases of works given to the world in portions—are questions of detail on which I do not think the house are to-night required to decide. On the one hand, I do not ask honourable members to vote for the second reading of this bill merely because they think there are some uncertainties in the law of copyright which it is desirable to remove, or some minor defects which they are prepared to remedy. On the other hand, I entreat them not to reject it on account of any objections to its mere details; but as they may think the legalized property of authors sufficiently prolonged and secured, or requiring a substantial extension, to oppose or to support it.

In maintaining the claim of authors to this extension, I will not intrude on the time of the house with any discussion on the question of law—whether perpetual copyright had existence by our common law; or of the philosophical question, whether the claim to this extent is founded in natural justice. On the first point, it is sufficient for me to repeat, what cannot be contradicted, that the existence of the legal right was recognised by a large majority of the judges, with Lord Mansfield at their head, after solemn and repeated argument; and that six to five of the judges only determined that the stringent words "*and no longer*" in the statute of Anne had taken that right away. And even this I do not call in aid so much by way of legal authority, as evidence of the feeling of those men (mighty, though few,) to whom our infant literature was confided by Providence, and of those who were in early time able to estimate the labour which we inherit. On the second point I will say nothing; unable, indeed, to understand why that which springs wholly from within, and contracts no other right by its usurpation, is to be regarded as baseless, because, by the condition of its very enjoyment, it not only enlarges the source of happiness to readers, but becomes the means of mechanical employment to printers, and of speculation to publishers. I am content to adopt the intermediate course, and to argue the question, whether a fair medium between two extremes has been chosen. What is to be said in favour of the line now drawn, except that it exists and bears an antiquity commencing in 1814? Is there any magic in the term of twenty-eight years? Is there any conceivable principle of justice which bounds the right, if the author survives that term, by the limit of his natural life? As far as expediency shall prevail—as far as the welfare of those for whom it is the duty and the wish of the dying author to provide, may be regarded by Parliament; the period of his death is precisely that when they will most need the worldly comforts which the property in his works would confer. And, as far as analogy may govern, the very attribute which induces us to regard with pride the works of intellect is, that they survive the mortal course of those who framed them—that they are akin to what is deathless. Why should that quality render them profitless to those in whose affectionate remembrance their author still lives, while they attest a nobler immortality? Indeed, among the opponents of this measure, it is ground of cavil that it is proposed to take the death of the author as a starting point for the period which it adds to the present term. It is urged as absurd that even the extent of this distant period should be affected by the accident of death; and yet those who thus argue are content to support the system which makes that accident the final boundary at which the living efficacy of authorship, for the advantage of its professors, ceases.

I perfectly agree with the publishers in the evidence given in 1818, and the statements which have been repeated more recently—that the extension of time will be a benefit only in one case in five hundred of works now issuing from the press; and I agree with them that we are legislating for that five hundredth case. Why not? It is the great prize which, out of the five hundred risks, genius and goodness win. It is the benefit that can only be achieved by that which has stood the test of time—of that which is essentially true and pure—of that which has survived spleen, criticism, envy, and the changing fashions of the world. Granted that only one author in five hundred attains this end; does it not invite many to attempt it, and impress on literature itself a visible mark of permanence and of dignity? The writers who attain it must belong to one of two classes. The first class consists of authors who have laboured to create the taste which should appreciate and reward them, and only attain that reputation which brings with it a pecuniary recompense when the term for which that reward is secured to them wanes. Is it unjust in this case, which is that of Wordsworth, now in the evening of life, and in the dawn of his fame, to allow the author to share in the remuneration that society tardily awards him? The other classes includes those who, like Sir Walter Scott, have combined the art of ministering to immediate delight with that of outlasting successive races of imitators and apparent rivals; who do receive a large actual amount of recompense, but whose accumulating compensation is stopped when it most should increase. Now, surely, as to them, the question is not what remuneration is sufficient in the judgment of the legislature to repay for certain benefactions to society, but whether, having won the splendid reward, our laws shall permit the winner to enjoy it? We could not decide the abstract question between genius and money, because there exist no common properties by which they can be tested, if we were dispensing an arbitrary reward; but the question how much the author ought to receive, is easily answered—so much as his readers are delighted to pay him. When we say that he has obtained immense wealth by his writings, what do we assert, but that he has multiplied the sources of enjoyment to countless readers, and lightened thousands of else sad, or weary, or dissolute hours? The two propositions are identical; the proof of the one at once establishing the other. Why, then, should we grudge it, any more than we would reckon against the soldier, not the pension or the grant, but the very prize-money which attests the splendour of his victories, and in the amount of his gains proves the extent of ours! Complaints have been made by one in the foremost rank in the opposition to this bill, the pioneer of the noble army of publishers, booksellers, printers, and bookbinders, who are arrayed against it [*]—that in selecting the case of Sir Walter Scott as an instance in which the extension of copyright would be just, I had been singularly unfortunate, because that great writer received, during the period of subsisting copyright, an unprecedented revenue from the immediate sale of his works. But, sir, the question is not one of reward—it is one of justice. How would this gentleman approve of the application of a similar rule to his own honest gains? From small beginnings this very publisher has, in the fair and honourable course of trade, I doubt not, acquired a splendid fortune, amassed by the sale of works, the property of the public—of works, whose authors have gone to their repose, from the fevers, the disappointments, and the jealousies which await a life of literary toil. Who grudges it to him? Who doubts his title to retain it? And yet this gentleman's fortune is all, every farthing of it, so much taken from the public, in the sense of the publisher's argument; it is all profit on books bought by that public, the accumulation of pence, which, if he had sold his books without profit, would have remained in the pockets of the buyers. On what principle is Mr. Tegg to retain what is denied to Sir Walter? Is it the claim of superior merit? Is it greater toil? Is it larger public service? His course, I doubt not, has been that of an honest laborious tradesman; but what have been its anxieties, compared to the stupendous labour, the sharp agonies of him, whose deadly alliance with those very trades whose members oppose me now, and whose noble resolution to combine the severest integrity with the loftiest genius, brought him to a premature grave—a grave which, by the operation of the law, extends its chillness even to the result of those labours, and despoils them of the living efficacy to assist those whom he has left to mourn him? Let any man contemplate that heroic struggle of which the affecting record has just been completed; and turn from the sad spectacle of one who had once rejoiced in the rapid creation of a thousand characters glowing from his brain, and stamped with individuality for ever, straining the fibres of the mind till the exercise which had been delight became torture—girding himself to the mighty task of achieving his deliverance from the load which pressed upon him, and with brave endeavour, but relaxing strength, returning to the toil till his faculties give way, the pen falls from his hand on the unmarked paper, and the silent tears of half-conscious imbecility fall upon it—to some prosperous bookseller in his country house, calculating the approach of the time (too swiftly accelerated) when he should be able to publish for his own gain those works fatal to life,—and then tell me, if we are to apportion the reward to the effort, where is the justice of the bookseller's claim? Had Sir Walter Scott been able to see, in the distance, an extension of his own right in his own productions, his estate and his heart had been set free, and the publishers and printers, who are our opponents now, would have been grateful to him for a continuation of labour and rewards which would have impelled and augmented their own.

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[*] This allusion has been singularly misconceived by the gentleman to whom it applies—Mr. Tegg, who thus notices it in his letter "To the Editor of the *Times*," of 20th Feb., 1839: "The learned serjeant calls me a *pioneer of literature*, because I open my shop for the sale of books, and not for the encouragement of authors; but what is the object of my customers who buy the books? Not one in a thousand would allege that he bought a book for the encouragement of the author; they come to procure the means of amusement, information, or instruction. The learned serjeant—a liberal—a friend to literature, a promoter of education—persists in bringing forward an *ex post facto* law, to counteract the advantages of education, to check the diffusion of literature, and to abridge the innocent entertainment of the public, by enhancing the price of books. I glory in the difference of our position." It will be seen by the comparison of the text and the comment, that Mr. Tegg is mistaken in supposing I had called him "a pioneer of literature." I only called him the pioneer of the opponents of the bill;—and that he is equally mistaken in supposing that I complained that he opens his shop for the sale of books, and not for the encouragement of authors. I ask for no encouragement to authors, but that which arises from the purchase of books by those who seek in them "the means of amusement, information and instruction;"—who voluntarily tax themselves for their own benefit:—and I venture to think that, as the gains of the publisher are just as effectually added to the price of a book as those of its author, it would be as beneficial to the public if the author of a book shared in the profit with the bookseller, even after the period to which the law now confines his interest in his own work, and when Mr. Tegg's good office in "opening his shop for its sale" sometimes commences So far from regarding Mr. Tegg as the "pioneer of literature," I have always contemplated him in the very opposite position,—as a follower of the march, whom the law allows to collect the spoils which it denies to the soldier who has fought for them. He has abundant reason, no doubt, "to glory in the difference of his position" and mine: but he quite mistakes his own, if he think he has any relation to literature, except as the depository of its winnings.

These two classes comprise, of necessity, all the instances in which the proposed change would operate at all; the first, that of those whose copyright only becomes valuable just as it is about to expire; the last, that of whose works which, at once popular and lasting, have probably, in the season of their first success, enriched the publisher far more than the author. It will not be denied that it is desirable to extend the benefit to both classes, if it can be done without injury to the public, or to subsisting individual interests. The suggested injury to the public is, that the price of books would be greatly enhanced; and on this assumption the printers and bookbinders have been induced to sustain the publishers in resisting a change which is represented as tending to paralyze speculation—to cause fewer books to be written, printed, bound, and bought—to deprive the honest workmen of their subsistence, and the people of the opportunity of enjoying the productions of genius. Even if such consequences are to be dreaded, and justice requires the sacrifice, it ought to be made. The community have no right to be enriched at the expense of individuals, nor is the Liberty of the Press (magic words, which I have heard strangely blended in the din of this controversy) the liberty to smuggle and to steal. Still, if to these respectable petitioners, men often of intelligence and refinement beyond their sphere, which they have acquired from their mechanical association with literature, I could think the measure fraught with such mischiefs, I should regard it with distrust and alarm. But never, surely, were the apprehensions of intelligent men so utterly baseless. In the first place, I believe that the existence of the copyright, even in that five-hundredth case, would not enhance the price of the fortunate work; for the author or the bookseller, who enjoys the monopoly, as it is called, is enabled to supply the article at a much cheaper rate when a single press is required to print all the copies offered for sale, instead of the presses and establishments of competing publishers; and I believe a comparison between the editions of standard works in which there is copyright, with those in which there is none, would confirm the truth of the inference.[*] To cite, as an instance to the contrary, "Clarendon's History of the Rebellion," is to confess that a fair test would disprove the objection; for what analogy is there between the motives and the acts of a great body, having no personal stimulus or interest, except to retain what is an ornament to their own power, and those of a number of individual proprietors? But, after all, it is only in this five-hundredth case—the one rare prize in this huge lottery—that even this effect is to be dreaded. Now, this effect is the possible enhancing the price of the five-hundredth or five-thousandth book, and this is actually supposed "to be a heavy blow and great discouragement to literature," enough to paralyze the energies of publishers, and to make Paternoster-row a desert! Let it only be announced, say our opponents, that an author, whose works may outlast twenty-eight years, shall bequeath to his children the right which he enjoyed, that possibly some sixpence a volume may be added to its price in such an event, and all the machinery of printing and publication will come to a pause! Why, sir, the same apprehension was entertained in 1813, when the publishers sought to obtain the extension of copyright for their own advantage to twenty-eight years. The printers then dreaded the effect of the prolonged monopoly: they petitioned against the bill, and they succeeded in delaying it for a session. And surely they had then far greater plausibility in their terrors; for in proportion as the period at which the contemplated extension begins is distant, its effects must be indistinct and feeble. Fewer books, of course, will survive twenty-eight years than fourteen; the act of 1814 operated on the greater number if at all; and has experience justified the fears which the publishers then laughed to scorn? Has the number of books diminished since then? Has the price of books been enhanced? Has the demand for the labour of printers or bookbinders slackened? Have the profits of the bookseller failed? I need no committee of inquiry to answer these questions, and they are really decisive of the issue. We all know that books have multiplied; that the quartos, in which the works of high pretension were first enshrined, have vanished; and, while the prices paid for copyrights have been far higher than in any former time, the proprietors of these copyrights have found it more profitable to publish in a cheap than in a costly form. Will authors, or the children of authors, be more obstinate—less able to appreciate and to meet the demands of the age—more apprehensive of too large a circulation—when both will be impelled by other motives than those of interest to seek the largest sale; the first by the impulse of blameless vanity or love of fame; the last by the affection and the pride with which they must regard the living thoughts of a parent taken from this world, finding their way through every variety of life, and cherished by unnumbered minds, which will bless that parent's memory?

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[*] The case of the Scriptures seems decisive on this point,—on which the entire argument against the bill hinges. In the First of Books there is perpetual copyright; and does any one believe it would be cheaper than it is if it were the subject of competition? The truth is, that the only way in which the printer *could* suffer by the extension of copyright is by a process which would make books cheaper;—the employment of one press, instead of many, to produce the same number of copies.

If, sir, I were called to state in a sentence the most powerful argument against the objection raised to the extension of copyright on the part of the public, I would answer,—"The opposition of the publishers." If they have ground to complain of loss, the public can have none. The objection supposes that the works would be sold at something more than the price of the materials, the workmanship, and a fair profit on the outlay, if the copyright be continued to the author; and, of course, also supposes that works of which the copyrights have expired are sold without profit beyond those charges—that, in fact, the author's superadded gain will be the measure of the public loss. Where, then, does the publisher intervene? Is the truth this—that the usage of the publishing trade at this moment indefinitely prolongs the monopoly by a mutual understanding of its members, and that besides the term of twenty-eight years, which the publisher has bought and paid for, he has something more? Is it a conventional copyright that is in danger? Is the real question whether the author shall hereafter have the full term to dispose of, or shall sell a smaller term, and really assign a greater? Now, either the publishers have no interest in the main question, or this is that interest. If this is that interest, how will the public lose by paying their extra sixpence to the author who created the work, instead of the gentleman who prints his name at the foot of the title-page, and who will still take his 25 per cent. on the copies he may sell? This argument applies, and, I apprehend, conclusively, to the main question—the justice and expediency of extending the term. I am aware that there is another ground of complaint more plausible, which does not apply to the main question, but to what is called the retrospective clause—a complaint, that in cases where the extended term will revert to the family of the author, instead of excluding, by virtue of an implied compact, all the rest of the world, they, like all the rest of the world, will be excluded; that they had a right to calculate on this liberty in common with others when they made this bargain; and that, therefore, it is a violation of faith to deprive them of their share of the common benefit. That there is any violation of faith I utterly deny—they still have all they have paid for; and when, indeed, they assert (which they do when they argue that the measure will confer no benefit on authors) they would not give an author any more for a copyright of sixty than of twenty-eight years, they themselves refute the charge of breach of faith, by showing that they do not reckon such distant contingencies in the price which they pay. If any inconvenience should arise, I should rejoice to consider how it can be obviated; and with that view I introduced those clauses which have been the subject of much censure, empowering the assignee to dispose of all copies on hand at the close of his term, and allowing the proprietors of stereotype plates still to use them. But supposing some inconvenience to attend this act of justice to authors, which I should greatly regret, still are the publishers entirely without consolation? In the first place, they would, as the bill now stands, gain all the benefit of the extension of future copyrights, hereafter sold absolutely to them by the author, and, according to their own statement, without any advance of price. If this benefit is small—is contingent—is nothing in 500 cases to one, so is the loss in those cases in which the right will result to the author. But it should further be recollected that every year, as copyrights expire, adds to the store from which they may take freely. In the infancy of literature a publisher's stock is scanty unless he pays for original composition; but as one generation after another passes away, histories, novels, poems—all of undying interest and certain sale—fall in; and each generation of booksellers becomes enriched by the spoils of time, to which he has contributed nothing. If, then, in a measure which restores to the author what the bookseller has conventionally received, some inconvenience beyond the just loss of what he was never entitled to obtain be incurred, is not the balance greatly in his favour? And can it be doubted that, in any case where the properties of the publisher and of the author's representatives are imperfect apart, either from additions to the original, or from the succession of several works falling in at different times, their common interest would unite them?

One of the arguments used, whether on behalf of the trade or the public I scarcely know, against the extension of the term, is derived from a supposed analogy between the works of an author and the discoveries of an inventor, whence it is inferred that the term which suffices for the protection of the one is long enough for the recompense of the other. It remains to be proved that the protection granted to patentees is sufficient; but supposing it to be so, although there are points of similarity between the cases, there are grounds of essential and obvious distinction. In cases of patent, the merits of the invention are palpable; the demand is usually immediate; and the recompense of the inventor, in proportion to the utility of his work, speedy and certain. In cases of patent, the subject is generally one to which many minds are at once applied; the invention is often no more than a step in a series of processes, the first of which being given, the consequence will almost certainly present itself sooner or later to some of those minds; and if it were not hit on this year by one, would probably be discovered the next by another; but who will suggest that if Shakspeare had not written Lear, or Richardson Clarissa, other poets or novelists would have invented them? In practical science every discovery is a step to something more perfect; and to give to the inventor of each a protracted monopoly would be to shut out improvement by others. But who can improve the masterpieces of genius? They stand perfect; apart from all things else; self-sustained; the models for imitation; the sources whence rules of art take their origin. Still they are ours in a sense in which no mechanical invention can be;—ours not only to ponder over and converse with—ours not only as furnishing our minds with thoughts, and peopling our weary seasons with ever-delightful acquaintances; but ours as suggesting principles of composition which we may freely strive to apply, opening new regions of speculation which we may delightfully explore, and defining the magic circle, within which, if we are bold and happy enough to tread, we may discern some traces of the visions they have invoked, to imbody for our own profit and honour; for the benefit of the printers and publishers who may send forth the products of these secondary inspirations to the world; and of all who may become refined or exalted by reading them.

But it may be said that this argument applies only to works of invention, which spring wholly or chiefly from the author's mind, as poems and romances; and that works which exhibit the results of historical search, of medical or scientific skill, and of philosophic thought, ought to be governed by the same law as improvements in mechanics employed on timber and metal. The analogy here is, to a certain extent, correct, so far as it applies to the fact discovered, the principle developed, the mode invented; the fallacy consists in this, that while the patent for fourteen years secures to the inventor the entire benefit of his discovery, the copyright does not give it to the author for a single hour, but, when published, it is the free unincumbent property of the world at once and for ever; all that the author retains is the sole right of publishing his own view of it in the style of illustration or argument which he has chosen. A fact ascertained by laborious inquiry becomes, on the instant, the property of every historian; a rule of grammar, of criticism, or of art, takes its place at once in the common treasury of human knowledge; nay, a theory in political economy or morals, once published, is the property of any man to accept, to analyze, to reason on, to carry out, to make the foundation of other kindred speculations. No one ever dreamed that to assume a position which another had discovered; to reject what another had proved to be fallacious; to occupy the table-land of recognised truths and erect upon it new theories, was an invasion of the copyright of the original thinker, without whose discoveries his successors might labour in vain. How earnest, how severe, how protracted, has been the mental toil by which the noblest speculations in regard to the human mind and its destiny have been conducted! Even when they attain to no certain results, they are no less than the beatings of the soul against the bars of its clay tenement, which show by their strength and their failure that it is destined and propertied for a higher sphere of action. Yet what right does the author retain in these, when he has once suggested them? The divine philosophy, won by years of patient thought, melts into the intellectual atmosphere which it encircles; tinges the dreams and strengthens the assurances of thousands. The truth is, that the law of copyright adapts itself, by its very nature, to the various descriptions of composition, preserving to the author, in every case, only that which he ought to retain. Regard it from its operation on the lowest species of authorship—mere compilation, in which it can protect nothing but the particular arrangements, leaving the materials common to all; through the gradations of history, of science, of criticism, of moral and political philosophy, of divinity, up to the highest efforts of the imagination, and it will be found to preserve nothing to the author, except that which is properly his own; while the free use of his materials is open to those who would follow in his steps. When I am asked, why should the inventor of the steam-engine have an exclusive right to multiply its form for only fourteen years, while a longer time is claimed for the author of a book? I may retort, why should he have for fourteen years what the discoverer of a principle in politics or morals, or of a chain of proof in divinity, or a canon of criticism, has not the protection of as many hours, except for the mere mode of exposition which he has adopted? Where, then, the analogy between literature and mechanical science really exists, that is, wherever the essence of the literary work is, like mechanism, capable of being used and improved on by others, the legal protection will be found far more liberally applied to the latter—necessarily and justly so applied—but affording no reason why we should take from the author that which is not only his own, but can never, from its nature, be another's.

It has, sir, been asserted, that authors themselves have little interest in this question, and that they are, in fact, indifferent or hostile to the measure. True it is, that the greatest living writers have felt reluctant to appear as petitioners for it, as a personal boon; but I believe there are few who do not feel the honour of literature embarked in the cause, and earnestly desire its success. Mr. Wordsworth, emerging for a moment from the seclusion he has courted, has publicly declared his conviction of its justice. Mr. Lockhart has stated his apprehension that the complete emancipation of the estate of Sir Walter Scott from its encumbrances depends on the issue; and, although I agree that we ought not to legislate for these cases, I contend that we ought to legislate by the light of their examples. While I admit that I should rejoice if the immediate effect of this measure were to cheer the evening of a great poet's life, to whom I am under intellectual obligations beyond all price, and to enlarge the rewards of other living authors whose fame will endure, I do not ask support to this measure on their behalf; but I present these as the proofs of the subsisting wrong. The instances pass away; successive generations do successive injustice; but the principle is eternal. True it is that in many instances, if the boon be granted, the errors and frailties which often attend genius may render it vain; true it is that in multitudes of cases it will not operate; but by conceding it we shall give to authors and to readers a great lesson of justice; we shall show that where virtue and genius combine we are ready to protect their noble offspring, and that we do not desire a miserable advantage at the cost of the ornaments and benefactors of the world. I call on each party in this house to unite in rendering this tribute to the minds by which even party associations are dignified. I call on those who anticipate successive changes in society, to acknowledge their debt to those who expand the vista of the future, and people it with goodly visions; on those who fondly linger on the past, and repose on time-hallowed institutions, to consider how much that is ennobling in their creed has been drawn from minds which have clothed the usages and forms of other days with the symbols of venerableness and beauty; on all, if they cannot find some common ground on which they may unite in drawing assurance of progressive good for the future from the glories of the past, to recognise their obligation to those, the products of whose intellect shall grace, and soften, and dignify the struggle!

The motion was opposed by Mr. Hume, Mr. Warburton, the Solicitor-General, Mr. Pryne, Mr. Warde, Mr. Grote, the Attorney-General, Mr. John Jervis, and Sir Edward Sugden; and supported by Sir Robert Inglis, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. D'Israeli, Mr. Milnes, and Mr. Wynn. On the division, the numbers were, for the second reading, 39; against it, 34. On the question that the bill should be committed, Mr. Philip Howard, who had voted in favour of the second reading, moved that it be referred to a select committee. This was declined by the mover: and after a short conversation, the house divided—for the committal of the bill in the usual course, 38; against it, 31,—upon which the bill was ordered to be committed on the following Wednesday.

On Wednesday, 2d of May, for which day the committee was fixed, there was *no house*; and the "dropped order" was fixed for the following Wednesday. On that day, Mr. Wakley,—adverting to the thinness of the house on the second reading of the bill, and the small majority by which it was carried,—pursuant to notice previously given, opposed the motion for the speaker leaving the chair. His speech on this occasion consisted chiefly of statements with which he had been supplied by Mr. Tegg, of the low prices at which he had purchased several popular works of living authors, some of whom were members of the house;—a series of personalities which afforded that kind of amusement which attend such allusions, and which, being delivered without ill-nature, gave no pain to the authors who were the subject of them; but not tending with very exact logic to show that the extension of the copyright, which protected all these works, would injure the public by maintaining a price beyond its reach. The motion for going into committee was also opposed by Mr. Warburton and Mr. Strutt, and supported by Mr. Wolverly Attwood, Mr. Milnes, and Sir Robert Inglis. On a division the numbers were,—for the committee, 116; against it, 64. In a desultory conversation which followed, Sir Edward Sugden complained that, as the bill then stood, the children of an author who had assigned his copyright to them "in consideration of natural love and affection," would be precluded from enjoying the proposed extension—the justice of which was felt by the supporters of the bill—and obviated in its further progress. The house then resolved itself into committee; but the lateness of the hour rendered it impossible to proceed with details; and the evening was spent without the measure having made any progress, except in the great increase of the majority by which it was supported.

The state of public business on the following Wednesdays—for which day the bill was always, without objection, fixed, and on which alone it had any chance of being discussed—prevented its further consideration till Wednesday, 6th of June. In the interval, an anxious consideration of the objections of the publishers of London and Edinburgh to the clause whereby a reverting interest in copyrights absolutely assigned was created in favour of authors, convinced those who had charge of the bill that it was impossible by any arrangements to prevent the inconvenience and loss which they suggested as consequential on such a boon to authors. They, therefore, determined to confine the operation of the bill on subsisting copyrights to cases in which the author had retained some interest on which it might operate; and with this, to their honour, the publishers were satisfied. Other alterations in matters of detail were suggested, which induced the mover to listen to the wishes of both friends and opponents of the bill, that it should be reprinted and committed again. When, therefore, on Wednesday, 6th of June, the bill again was before the house, and Mr. Warburton urged that it should be reprinted, the mover at once acceded to his desire; briefly stated the principal alterations which he had accorded to the wishes of the publishers, and did justice to the spirit of fairness and moderation with which they had foreborne to ask for themselves any share of the benefits proposed for authors; and had only desired that these benefits should not be attended by undeserved injury to themselves. Lord John Russell, who had hitherto refrained from expressing any opinion on the measure, took this opportunity of throwing out a hesitating disapproval, or rather, doubt, but did not object to the course proposed. The bill was accordingly committed *pro formâ*, ordered to be reprinted, and its further consideration adjourned to Wednesday, 20th of June. In pursuance of this arrangement, the bill was reprinted in nearly its present form; and came on for discussion at a late hour on the 28th of June. It was then obvious that,—considering the opposition with which its details were menaced by Mr. Warburton and others, and the state of the order-book,—no reasonable hope remained of carrying it through committee, and the subsequent stages, during the session. When, therefore, the period of its discussion arrived, it was, on the friendly recommendation of Mr. Gladstone, withdrawn, with a pledge for its early introduction in the ensuing year.

On Tuesday, 12th of February, in the session of 1839, leave was obtained to bring in the bill, which, nearly in the state in which it had been settled the preceding year, was introduced the same evening. On Wednesday, 28th of February, its second reading was moved;—after the presentation of the petitions which are alluded to in the following sheets.

SPEECH ON MOVING THE SECOND READING OF A BILL TO AMEND THE LAW OF COPYRIGHT,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1839.

MR. SPEAKER—After the attention which, in past sessions, has been rendered by this House to the interests of literature, as affected by the laws of copyright—an attention gratefully acknowledged in the petitions which I have just presented—I shall best discharge my duty by reminding you, without preface, of the question which we once more are called on to decide, and by stating the position in which it stands, and the materials which we have to assist us in answering it. That question is, *Whether the present limitation of copyright is just?* I will sum up my reasons for contending for the negative in language adopted by some of the distinguished persons whose petitions are before you. They allege—"That the term during which the law secures to the authors the profits arising from the productions of their own industry and genius is insufficient to provide for the fair reward of works written to endure: that the extension of the term proposed by this bill would encourage such compositions; that it would enable individuals to devote their powers to the lasting benefit and delight of mankind, without the apprehension that in so doing they shall impoverish their own descendants; and, that, while it would tend to the profit only of the greatest and the best of those engaged in literature, it would confer dignity and honour on the pursuits of all."

These propositions, to which I seek your assent, are now for the first time imbodied by some of the most distinguished authors as the grounds of their own prayer, and will probably be expressed by many others, whose feelings I know, if you permit this bill to proceed. When I first solicited for these arguments the notice of this House, I thought they rested on principles so general; that the interests of those who labour to instruct and illustrate the age in which they live are so inseparably blended with all that affects its morality and its happiness; that the due reward of the greatest of its authors is so identified with the impulses they quicken—with the traits of character they mirror—with the deeds of generosity, of courage and of virtue, which they celebrate, and with the multitudes whom they delight and refine, that I felt it was not for them alone that I asked the shelter of the law, and I did not wish to see them soliciting it as a personal boon. The appeal, though thus unsupported, was not unfelt; and the bill proceeded, without a hint of opposition, until the demise of the crown closed the session and stopped its progress. In the interval which thus occurred, a number of eminent publishers saw reason to apprehend that certain clauses in the bill, by which it was proposed to give to authors who had assigned their copyrights under the subsisting law a reverting interest after the expiration of its term, would injuriously affect their vested rights, and they naturally prepared to oppose it. They were accompanied or followed in this opposition by various persons connected with the mechanical appliances of literature—by master-printers, compositors, pressmen, type-founders, paper-makers, and book-binders, smitten with the strange fear that to extend the term of copyright (though they all agree that the extension would operate only in one case out of five hundred) would destroy their trade, and their petitions were plenteously showered on the table of the House. Regard to the state of public business, and a belief that, although supported by increasing majorities, the nature of the opposition with which the bill was threatened would multiply and prolong the discussions beyond the bounds of the time which could be applied to such an object, induced me, at the suggestion of my honourable friend the member for Newark, again to withdraw it. Having been taunted with the absence of petitions in favour of the measure, I have now the support I did not before seek; and I doubt not, the example once set will be followed by many who feel deeply the justice of the cause, and are indignant at the grounds on which it has been opposed. Few as these petitions are, compared with the number of those who desire the success of this bill, I shall not fear to oppose the facts they state, the reasonings they suggest, or the authority with which they are stamped, with those accumulated by its opponents during the last session.

Having carefully perused the petitions against us, I am surprised to find how utterly destitute they are of information really bearing on the case, with an exception which does not now apply to the bill; for I may dismiss the complaints of the eminent members of the publishing trade, and of all who sympathized in their fears. Impressed with the force of some of their objections, I proposed various means by which I hoped to remove them, without denying to authors who had assigned their subsisting interest the benefits of that extended term which it was proposed to create. But I was compelled to abandon the attempt as hopeless, and to content myself with applying the extension to the cases of authors who had retained an interest in their works, and to books hereafter to be written. In this alteration I have offered nothing to the publishers, except in the rare and peculiar case of a joint interest co-extensive with the entire copyright in which case, unable to sever the benefit without extreme inconvenience to the publisher, I have chosen rather to grant it to both than to neither; and it is to the honour of the publishers, that, instead of seeking an unworthy compromise, they have been satisfied with the mere withdrawal of clauses which would have subjected them to certain inconvenience, and probable loss. Their opposition has ceased with the provisions which raised it; and with it all the allegations in the petitions which relate to it may be dismissed. There remain those of the printers and their allies, persons whose interests deserve the careful regard of the legislature, but whose opinions have no authority beyond the reasonings they adduce to support them. They are not like persons engaged in some occupation on which there is an immediate pressure, which they who feel most keenly can most vividly explain; nor like persons apprehending some change directly affecting their profits, under circumstances peculiarly within the range of their experience; they are mere speculators, like ourselves, on the probabilities of the distant future. All their apprehensions centre in one—that if the term of copyright be extended, fewer books will be printed; fewer hands will be required; fewer presses set up; fewer types cast; fewer reams of paper needed; and (though I know not whether the panic has penetrated to the iron-mine or ascended to the rag-loft) that a paralysis will affect all these departments of trade. Now, if there were any real ground for these busy fears, they would not want facts to support them. In the year, 1814, when the term of copyright was extended from fourteen to twenty-eight years, the same classes expressed similar alarms. The projected change was far more likely to be prejudicial to them than the present, as the number of books on which it operated was much larger; and yet there is no suggestion in their petitions that a single press remained unemployed, or a paper-mill stood still; and, indeed, it is a matter of notoriety, that since then publications have greatly multiplied, and that books have been reduced in price with the increase of readers. The general arguments of these petitions are those which the opponents of the measure urge, all resolving themselves into the assumptions, that if copyrights be extended, books will be dearer; that cheap books are necessarily a benefit to the public; and that the public interest should prevail over the claims of those who create the materials of its instruction. But there is one petition which illustrates so curiously the knowledge which these petitioners possess on the subject of their fears, and the modesty with which they urge them, that I must trespass on the patience of the House while I offer a specimen of its allegations. It is a petition presented by the honourable member for Kilkenny, agreed on at a public meeting at the Mechanics' Institute, Southampton-buildings, by "compositors, pressmen, and others engaged in the printing profession." After a sweeping assumption of the whole question between authors and readers, these petitioners thus designate the application made to this House on behalf of literature:—"The books to which it is assumed the present law does not afford sufficient protection are those of a trashy and meretricious character, whose present popularity deludes their writers with a vain hope of an immortal reputation." Now, the works which were named by way of example, when this bill was introduced, were those of Coleridge, of Wordsworth, and of Sir Walter Scott; and if these are intended by the petitioners, I fear they have made no good use of cheap books, or that the books they have read are dear at any price. If the object of the bill is the protection of "trashy and meretricious" works, it may be absurd, but it must be harmless; for, as to such works, it must be a dead letter. The printers who fear that one set of "trashy and meretricious" works should endure after the lapse of twenty-eight years, and should thus deprive them of the opportunity of printing a brilliant succession of such works, to which they do not refuse the aid of their types, partake an apprehension like the alarm of some nervous remainderman, who should take fright at the creation of a term of 999 years by a tenant for life, overlooking in his fears the necessary condition "if he should so long live;" for so surely as natural death will await the decay of the human frame, shall oblivion cover the "trashy and meretricious" book, and leave room for successor after successor to employ compositors, to sparkle and expire. But, the petitioners proceed—"Even suppose their success would be permanent, the present high profits derived by their authors are an ample return for the time employed in their composition." So these gentlemen, forgetting that the chief ground of the bill is, that the works on behalf of which its extension is sought often begin to repay their authors only when the copyright is about to expire, think themselves competent to estimate the anxieties, the heart-aches, the feverish hopes, the bitter disappointments, the frequent failures, the cheerless toils, with which an author's time is filled, and which disturb them little when they are arranging his words. They proceed—"while it is proved, that books of deep research and intrinsic value would not be rendered more valuable by an extension of the law of copyright, however extended that law might be." How not more valuable? Not much more valuable to sell, perhaps, but more valuable to preserve; else, if there is no gain to the author, where is the loss to the public? After a round assertion, "that the bill must be viewed as one injuriously affecting the booksellers, book-binders, paper-makers, type-founders, and all branches connected with the printing business," they then proceed to extol their own profession:—"That the profits derived from a book depend not on the art of writing, but on the art of printing; for that, without the facilities which improved mechanical improvements afford, the number of copies would be few and high-priced, and the profits of the author lower; and, therefore, it is unjust that authors should endeavour to injure by exclusive laws a profession to which they are indebted for the rank they hold and the wealth they possess." Surely the old critic Dennis, who, when he heard the thunder roll over the mimic scenes, and used to claim it as his own, was reasonable, compared to these gentlemen of the Mechanics' Institute. Whatever may be the benefit which the art of printing has conferred on genius—genius which had achieved imperishable triumphs long before its discovery, it is astounding to hear this claim made by those who are now engaged in a simple mechanical pursuit. The manufacturer of bayonets or of gunpowder might as well insist that he, and not the conqueror of Waterloo, should be the recipient of national gratitude. Where would their profession be if no author had written? There are some things more precious even than knowledge; and, strange as it may seem to the utilitarian philosophers, I venture to think gratitude one; and if it is, I would ask these petitioners to consider how many presses have been employed and honoured, how many families in their own class have been enriched by the unceasing labours of a single mind—that of Sir Walter Scott—exhausted, fading, glimmering, perishing from this world in their service!

As the concluding paragraph of this petition merely repeats an analogy of literary works to mechanical inventions, which I have grappled with before, and which, if necessary, I am ready to expose again, I will pass from it and from the petitions against this bill—which, I assert, do not present a single fact for the information of the House—to the petitions which disclose the grievances and the claims of authors. And first, to show, by way of example, how insufficient the present term is to remunerate authors who contemplate works of great labour and research, I will refer to the petition of Mr. Archibald Alison, sheriff of the county of Lanark. This gentleman, son of the venerable author of the celebrated "Essay on Taste," was brought up to the Scottish bar, and being gifted with excellent talents, and above all with that most valuable of talents, unwearied industry, enjoyed the fairest prospects of success. Having, however, conceived the design of writing the history of Europe during the French Revolution, he resigned those hopes for the office of Sheriff of Lanarkshire, which, limiting his income to a moderate sum, left him at leisure to pursue his scheme. On that work he has now been engaged for twenty-five years. To collect materials for its composition he has repeatedly visited the principal cities of Europe, and his actual expenditure in books and journeys to lay the foundations of his work has already exceeded 2,000*l.*, and will be doubled if he should live to complete it. Seven volumes have successively appeared; the copyright is unassigned; and as the work is making a regular progress, fourteen years must elapse before the pecuniary outlay will be repaid. At the expiration of twenty-eight years, supposing the work to succeed on an average calculated on its present sale, its author will only obtain half what he might have acquired by the devotion of the same time to ephemeral productions; so that, unless his life should be prolonged beyond the ordinary lot of man, its labours to his family will be almost in vain, unless you considerably extend the term of his property; and then, in return for his sacrifices, he will leave them a substantial inheritance. Of a similar nature is the case of another petitioner, Dr. Cook, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrew's, author of the "History of the Reformation in Scotland," a "History of the Church of Scotland," and of other historical works which are now standard authorities, and on the composition of which he has been engaged for the last thirty years. In their composition he has incurred great expense. The copyrights are vested in himself; but it depends on your decision whether his family shall derive any advantages from them. He concludes—"considering this law as at variance with the essential principles of justice, and calculated to impede the course of literature and science," by earnestly imploring the House to "pass this bill for so extending the term of copyright as will secure the interest of the authors of extensive and laborious works without in the slightest degree interfering with the public good." Dr. James Thomson, the Professor of Mathematics in the University of Glasgow, states the nature and history of several elementary works, the products of his labour, which are slowly beginning to recompense him, and especially invites attention to the manner in which the law bears on works used as text-books in schools and universities, having to contend against the partialities of teachers for books with which use has made them familiar, and of booksellers for works in which they are interested, and which may only begin to obtain attention when the copyright is about to cease. Sir David Brewster has spent a most laborious and most useful life, and still spends it, in the composition of works which at once instruct and charm, and which can only remunerate him by the extension of the term. Now, I ask, is there no property in these petitioners worthy of protection? "No," said, and will say, some of the opponents of this bill; "none. We think that from the moment an author puts his thoughts on paper and delivers them to the world, his property therein wholly ceases." What! has he invested no capital? embarked no fortune? If human life is nothing in your commercial tables—if the sacrifice of profession, of health, of gain, is nothing—surely the mere outlay of him who has perilled his fortune to instruct mankind may claim some regard! Or is the interest itself so refined—so ethereal—that you cannot regard it as property, because it is not palpable to sense as to feeling? Is there any justice in this? If so, why do you protect moral character as a man's most precious possession, and compensate the party who suffers unjustly in that character by damages? Has this possession any existence half so palpable as the author's right in the printed creation of his brain? I have always thought it one of the proudest triumphs of human law that it is able to recognise and to guard this breath and finer spirit of moral action—that it can lend its aid in sheltering that invisible property which exists solely in the admiration and affection of others; and if it may do this, why may it not protect his interest in those living words which, as well observed by that great thinker, Mr. Hazlitt, are, "after all, the only things which last for ever?"

From these examples of works of labour and pecuniary outlay, I turn to that of a poet, whose name has often been mentioned in the discussion of this measure, who has supported it by his published opinion, but who has now, for the first time, enforced it by petition. Mr. Wordsworth states that he is on the point of attaining his seventieth year; that forty-six years ago he published his first work, and that he has continued to publish original works at various intervals down to 1835. The copyright in a considerable part of these works is now contingent on his life; in a few years the far larger portion of them will be holden by the same tenure; and his most extensive and elaborate work, "The Excursion," will be in this condition, if he should be spared for four years longer. He represents that "having engaged and persevered in literary labours less with the expectation of producing speedy effect than with a view to interest and benefit mankind remotely, though permanently, his works, though never out of demand, have made their way slowly into general circulation;" and he states as a fact, directly bearing on this question, that his works have, within the last four years, brought a larger emolument than in all preceding years; which would now be bounded by his death; and the greater part of which, if he had died four years ago, would have been wholly lost to his family. How will this case be answered? I suppose, as I have heard it, when less fully stated, answered before, that it proves that there is no necessity for the extension of copyright, because without its encouragement a poet thus gifted has been ready to devote his powers amidst neglect and scorn to the highest and the purest aims. I will not answer by merely reminding those who urge this ungenerous argument, that there may not always be attendant on such rare endowments the means of offering such a sacrifice, either from independent resources or from simple tastes. I reply at once, that the argument is at utter variance with the plainest rules of morality and justice. I should like to hear how it would be received on a motion for a national grant to one who had fought his country's battles! I should like to hear the indignation and the scorn which would be expressed towards any one who should venture to suggest that the impulses which had led to heroic deeds had no respect to worldly benefits; that the love of country and glory would always lead to similar actions; and that, therefore, out of regard to the public, we ought to withhold all reward from the conqueror. And yet the case of the poet is the stronger; for we do not propose to reward him out of any fund but that which he himself creates—from any pockets but from those of every one whom he individually blesses—and our reward cannot be misapplied when we take Time for our Arbitrator and Posterity for our Witnesses!

It cannot have escaped the attention of the house that many of the petitioners are professors in the universities of Scotland; and from the laborious nature of their pursuits—their love of literature, fostered at a distance from the applause of the capital, and from the independence and the purity of their character, I venture to think that their experience and their judgments are entitled to peculiar weight. Now, the University of St. Andrew's, after powerfully urging the claims of authors generally, thus submits the peculiar claims of their countrymen:—"Your petitioners venture to submit, that in Scotland, where the few rewards which used to be conferred on clergymen of literary and scientific merit have been withdrawn, and where the incomes of the professors in her universities have been allowed to suffer great diminution, these individuals have strong motives to solicit, and additional grounds to expect, that their literary rights may be extended, and rendered as beneficial as possible to themselves and their families." Among these professors, and among the petitioners for this bill, is a clergyman unsurpassed in Christian eloquence, in reach of thought, in unwearied zeal; who has disregarded ease and intellectual delights prodigally to expend his energies on that which he regards as the sacred cause of the church and religion of his country; and who depends on his copyrights, in such of the labours of his mind as he has committed to the press, to make amends for a professional income far below his great intellectual claims. In addressing me on the subject of this bill, Dr. Chalmers says, "My professional income has always been so scanty, that I should have been in great difficulties, had it not been for my authorship; and I am not aware of a more desirable compensation for the meagre emoluments of the offices I have held, than that those profits should be secured and perpetuated in favour of my descendants." And who among us, not only of those who sympathize with his splendid exertions on behalf of the church of Scotland, but of all who feel grateful for the efforts by which he has illustrated and defended our common faith, will not desire that wish to be fulfilled? How one of the publishers of his country feels towards such authors may be seen in the petition of Mr. Smith, of Glasgow, who even desires to limit the power of assigning copyright to twenty-one years, and then contrasts his case with that of those by whose creations he has been enriched. He states, "that he has obtained estate and competence by the sale of books published or sold by him, which property he has a right to entail or give in legacy for the benefit of his heirs; while the authors who have produced the works that have enriched him have no interest for their heirs by the present law of copyright in the property which they have solely constituted." When I find these petitions signed by the most distinguished ornament of the Scotch church, Dr. Chalmers—and by one of the most eminent among the Dissenting divines, Dr. Wardlaw, I cannot help associating with them a case which came under my notice a few days ago, on an application to me to assist a great-grandson of Dr. Doddridge, in presenting a memorial to the bounty of the crown. Here was the descendant of one of the idols of the religious world, whose works have circulated in hundreds of thousands of copies, enduring a state of unmerited privation and suffering, from which a trifle on each volume of his ancestor's works now adorning the libraries of the wealthy Dissenters would amply relieve him!

On these contrasted cases the House has now to decide. But before I leave the question in its hands, it is fit I should advert for a moment to those opponents of the bill who, disclaiming the publishers and printers, appear on behalf of what they call the public, and who insist that it is our duty to obtain for that public the works of genius and labour at the lowest possible price. Now, passing over a doubt, which I dare scarcely hint in their presence, whether the diffusion of cheap copies of any work necessarily implies in an equal degree the diffusion of its beauties or the veneration of its injunctions, permit me to ask whether even for the public it is not desirable that works should be correct as well as cheap, and that it should have the benefit of the matured judgment of its instructors? Now, this can only be effected by permitting the family of the author to watch over his fame. An author who, in a life devoted to literature, has combined gifts of the historian and the poet—Mr. Southey—who has thought the statement of his case might have more effect than a petition, has permitted me to elucidate this view of the case by his example. He has lately published a complete edition of his poems, correcting the blemishes which during many years have presented themselves to his severer judgment; his copyrights in many of the original poems will expire with his life; in the corrected edition his family will enjoy an interest, but in the original poems they will retain none; and it will be in the power of Mr. Tegg, or any other of those worthy benefactors of the public who keep duteous watch over the deathbed of copyrights, to republish any of those poems with all their repented errors, and the addition of those gross blunders which are always introduced when a reprint undergoes no revision but that of a printer. But is it even certain that the books thus carelessly printed will be actually cheaper in price than if the descendants of the author published them for their own advantage? It is not fair to judge of this by recent instances, produced in the first eagerness of the freebooters of the trade to seize on and parade their spoils. It should be recollected that a proprietor who uses only one machine for publication may, with profit to himself, supply the market more cheaply than numbers who have separate expenses, and look for separate gains. But if the argument be doubtful, the fact at least is clear, and I may call the honourable member for Finsbury as my witness to prove it; for he has shown in this House, to the offence of none, but the amusement of all, and to the proof of my case, how cheaply books charged with an expensive copyright may be obtained of his friend Mr. Tegg, who, he states, nevertheless, has a stock worth more than 170,000*l.*, which, if the principles of my opponents be fairly applied, is justly distributable among their favourite and much injured public. But grant the whole assumption—grant that if copyright be extended, the few books it will affect will be dearer to the public by the little the author will gain by each copy—grant that they will not be more correct or authentic than when issued wholesale from the press; still is there nothing good for the people but cheap knowledge? Is it necessary to associate with their introduction to the works of the mighty dead the selfish thought that they are sharing in the riot of the grave, instead of cherishing a sense of pride that, while they read, they are assisting to deprive the grave of part of its withering power over the interests of survivors? But if it were desirable, is it possible to separate a personal sympathy with an author from the first admiration of his works? We do not enter into his labours as into some strange and dreamy world, raised by the touch of a forgotten enchanter; the affections are breathing around us, and the author being dead, yet speaks in accents triumphant over death and time. As from the dead level of an utilitarian philosophy no mighty work of genius ever issued, so never can such a work be enjoyed except in that happy forgetfulness of its doctrines, which always softens the harshest creed. But I believe that those who thus plead for the people are wholly unauthorized by the feelings of the people; that the poor of these realms are richer in spirit than their advocates understand them; and that they would feel a pride in bestowing their contributions in the expression of respect to that great intellectual ancestry whose fame is as much theirs as it is the boast of the loftiest amongst us. I do not believe that the people of Scotland share in the exultation of the publishers who have successively sent among them cheap editions of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," "Marmion," and the "Lady of the Lake;" that they can buy them at a lower price than if the great minstrel who produced them were still among the living. I cannot believe that they can so soon forget their obligations to one who has given their beautiful country a place in the imagination of mankind which may well compensate for the loss of that political individuality they so long and so proudly enjoyed, as to count with satisfaction the pence they may save by that premature death which gave his copyrights to contesting publishers, and left his halls silent and cold. It is too late to do justice to Burns; but I cannot believe the peasant who should be inspired by him to walk "in glory and in joy, following his plough by the mountain side," or who, casting his prideful look, on Saturday evening, around his circle of children, feels his pleasure heightened and reduplicated in the poet's mirror, would regret to think that the well-thumbed volume which had made him conscious of such riches had paid the charge of some sixpence towards the support of that poet's children.

There is only one other consideration I would suggest before I sit down, which relates not to any class, but to the community and our duties towards them. It is thus expressed in Mr. Wordsworth's petition:—"That this bill has for its main object to relieve men of letters from the thraldom of being forced to court the living generation to aid them in rising above slavish taste and degraded prejudice, and to encourage them to rely on their own impulses." Surely this is an object worthy of the legislature of a great people, especially in an age where restless activity and increasing knowledge present temptations to the slight and the superficial which do not exist in a ruder age. Let those who "to beguile the time look like the time," have their fair scope—let cheap and innocent publications be multiplied as much as you please,—still the character of the age demands something impressed with a nobler labour, and directed to a higher aim. "The immortal mind craves objects that endure." The printers need not fear. There will not be too many candidates for "a bright reversion," which only falls in when the ear shall be deaf to human praise. I have been accused of asking you to legislate "on some sort of sentimental feeling." I deny the charge: the living truth is with us; the spectral phantoms of depopulated printing-houses and shops are the baseless fancies of our opponents. If I were here beseeching indulgence for the frailties and excesses which sometimes attend fine talents—if I were here appealing to your sympathy on behalf of crushed hopes and irregular aspirations, the accusation would be just. I plead not for the wild, but for the sage; not for the perishing, but for the eternal: for him who, poet, philosopher, or historian, girds himself for some toil lasting as life—lays aside all frivolous pursuits for one virtuous purpose—that when encouraged by the distant hope of that "All-hail hereafter," which shall welcome him among the heirs of fame, he may not shudder to think of it as sounding with hollow mockery in the ears of those whom he loves, and waking sullen echoes by the side of a cheerless hearth. For such I ask this boon, and through them for mankind—and I ask it in the confidence with the expression of which your veteran petitioner Wordsworth closed his appeal to you—"That in this, as in all other cases, justice is capable of working out its own expediency!"

THE WESTMINSTER PLAY.

DECEMBER, 1845.

NOT from the youth-illumined stage alone
Is gladness shed; it breathes around from all
Whose names, imprinted on each honour'd wall,
Speak deathless boyhood; on whose hearts the tone,
Which makes each ancient phrase familiar grown
New by its crisp expression, seems to fall
A strain from distant years; while striplings, still
In careless prime, bid younger bosoms thrill
With plaudits such as lately charm'd their own—
While richest humour strangely serves to fill
Worn eyes with childlike tears; for Memory lifts
Time's curtain from the spirits' holiest stage,
And makes even strangers share the precious gifts
Which clasp in golden meshes Youth and Age.

THE END.

CRITICAL

AND

ISCELLANEOUS ESSAYS.

BY

JAMES STEPHEN.

IN ONE VOLUME.

PHILADELPHIA:
A. HART, LATE CAREY & HART,
No. 126 CHESTNUT STREET.
1852.

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STEPHEN'S MISCELLANIES.

LIFE OF WILLIAM WILBERFORCE BY HIS SONS.[*]

[Edinburgh Review, 1838.]

These volumes record the Life of a man, who, in an age fertile beyond most others in illustrious characters, reached, by-paths till then unexplored, an eminence never before attained by any private member of the British Parliament. We believe we shall render an acceptable service to our readers, by placing them in possession of a general outline of this biography.

William Wilberforce was born at Hull on the 24th of August, 1759. His father, a merchant of that town, traced his descent from a family which had for many generations possessed a large estate at Wilberfoss, in the East Riding of the county of York. From that place was derived the name which the taste, or caprice of his later progenitors, modulated into the form in which it was borne by their celebrated descendant. His mother was nearly allied to many persons of consideration; amongst whom are numbered the present Bishops of Winchester and Chester, and the members of the great London banking-house, of which Lord Carrington was the head.

The father of William Wilberforce died before his son had completed his tenth year; and the ample patrimony which he then inherited was afterwards largely increased on the death of a paternal uncle, to whose guardianship his child was committed. By that kinsman he was placed at a school in the immediate neighbourhood of his own residence at Wimbledon, in Surry. The following are the characteristic terms in which, at the distance of many years, the pupil recorded his recollections of this first stage of his literary education:—"Mr. Chalmers, the master, himself a Scotchman, had an usher of the same nation, whose red beard, for he scarcely shaved once a month, I shall never forget. They taught French, Arithmetic, and Latin. With Greek we did not much meddle. It was frequented chiefly by the sons of merchants, and they taught therefore every thing, and nothing. Here I continued some time as a parlour boarder. I was sent at first among the lodgers, and I can remember, even now, the nauseous food with which we were supplied, and which I could not eat without sickness."

His early years were not, however, to pass away without some impressions more important, if not more abiding, than those which had been left on his sensitive nerves by the red beard of one of his Scotch teachers, and by the ill savour of the dinners of the other. His uncle's wife was a disciple of George Whitfield, and under her pious care he acquired a familiarity with the Sacred Writings, and a habit of devotion of which the results were perceptible throughout the whole of his more mature life. While still a school-boy, he had written several religious letters, "much in accordance with the opinions which he subsequently adopted," and which, but for his peremptory interdict, the zeal of some indiscreet friend would have given to the world. "If I had stayed with my uncle, I should probably have been a bigoted despised Methodist," is the conclusion which Mr. Wilberforce formed on looking back to this period, after an interval of nearly thirty years. His mother's foresight, apprehending this result, induced her to withdraw him from his uncle's house, and to place him under the charge of the master of the endowed school at Pocklington, in Yorkshire,—a sound and well-beneficed divine, whose orthodoxy would seem to have been entirely unalloyed by the rigours of Methodism. The boy was encouraged to lead a life of idleness and pleasure, wasting his time in a round of visits to the neighbouring gentry, to whom he was recommended by his social talents, especially by his rare skill in singing; while, during his school vacations, the religious impressions of his childhood were combated by a constant succession of such convivial gayeties as the town of Hull could afford. Ill as this discipline was calculated to lay the foundation of good intellectual habits, it was still less adapted to substitute for the excitement and dogmatism of Whitfield's system, a piety resting on a nobler and more secure basis. One remarkable indication, however, was given of the character by which his future life was to be distinguished. He placed in the hands of a schoolfellow, (who survives to record the fact,) a letter to be conveyed to the editor of the York paper, which he stated to be "in condemnation of the odious traffic in human flesh."—On the same authority he is reported to have "greatly excelled all the other boys in his compositions, though seldom beginning them till the eleventh hour."

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[*] *Life of William Wilberforce.* By his sons Robert Isaac Wilberforce. M A., Vicar of East Farlough, late Fellow of the Oriel College; and Samuel Wilberforce, M. A., Rector of Brighstone. 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.

From school Mr. Wilberforce was transferred, at the age of seventeen, to St. John's College, Cambridge. We trust that the picture which he has drawn of the education of a young gentleman of fortune, in an English University, towards the close of the last century, will seem an incredible fiction to the present members of that learned society. "The Fellows of the College," he says, "did not act towards me the part of Christians, or even of honest men. Their object seemed to be to make and keep me idle. If ever I appeared studious, they would say to me—'Why, in the world should a man of your fortune trouble himself with fagging?' I was a good classic, and acquitted myself well in the College examinations, but mathematics, which my mind greatly needed, I almost entirely neglected, and was told that I was too clever to require them."

With such a preparation for the duties of active life, Mr. Wilberforce passed at a single step from the University to the House of Commons. The general election of 1780, occurring within less than a month from the completion of his twenty-first year, "the affection of his townsmen, 'not unaided by' an expenditure of from eight to nine thousand pounds," placed him at the head of the poll for "the town and county of Hull." Although at this time Mr. Wilberforce states himself to have been "so ignorant of general society as to have come up to London stored with arguments to prove the authenticity of Rowley's Poems," yet so rich and so accomplished an aspirant could not long be excluded from the mysteries of the world of fashion which now burst upon him. Five clubs enrolled him among their members. He "chatted, played at cards, or gambled" with Fox, Sheridan, and Fitzpatrick—fascinated the Prince of Wales by his singing at Devonshire House—produced inimitable imitations of Lord North's voice and manner—sang catches with Lord Sandwich—exchanged epigrams with Mrs. Creeve—partook of a Shaksperian dinner at the Boar, in East Cheap—"shirked the Duchess of Gordon"—and danced till five in the morning at Almack's. The lassitude of fashionable life was effectually relieved by the duties or amusements of a Parliamentary career, not unattended by some brilliant success. Too rich to look to public service as a means of subsistence, and, at this period, ambitious rather of distinction than of eminence, Mr. Wilberforce enjoyed the rare luxury of complete independence. Though a decided opponent of the North American war, he voted with Lord North against Sir Fletcher Norton's re-election as Speaker, and opposed Mr. Pitt on the second occasion of his addressing the House, although he was already numbered amongst the most intimate of his friends. *This alliance,* commenced apparently at the University, had ripened into an affectionate union which none of the vicissitudes of political life could afterwards dissolve. They partook in each other's labours and amusements, and the zest with which Mr. Pitt indulged in these relaxations, throws a new and unexpected light on his character. They joined together in founding a club, at which, for two successive winters, Pitt spent his evenings, while, at Mr. Wilberforce's villa at Wimbledon, he was established rather as an inmate than as a guest. There he indulged himself even in boisterous gayety; and it strangely disturbs our associations to read of the son and rival of Lord Chatham rising early in the morning to sow the flower-beds with the fragments of a dress-hat with which Lord Harrowby had come down from the opera. There also were arranged fishing and shooting parties; in one of which the future champion of the anti-Gallican war narrowly escaped an untimely grave from the misdirected gun of his friend. On the banks of Windermere, also, Mr. Wilberforce possessed a residence, where the Parliamentary vacation found him "surrounded with a goodly assortment of books." But the discovery was already made that the actumnal *ennui* of the fashionable world might find relief among the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland, and "boating, riding, and continual parties" fully occupied the time which had been devoted to retirement and study. From these *amici fures temporis* Mr. Wilberforce escaped, in the autumn of 1783, to pass a few weeks with Mr. Pitt in France. They readily found introductions to the supper table of Marie Antoinette, and the other festivities of Fontainbleau. Louis XVI. does not appear to have made a very flattering impression on his young guests. "The King," says Mr. Wilberforce, in a letter written about that time, "is so strange a being of the hog kind, that it is worth going a hundred miles for a sight of him, especially a boar-hunting." At Paris "he received with interest the hearty greetings which Dr. Franklin tendered to a rising member of the English Parliament, who had opposed the American war."

Graver cares awaited Mr. Wilberforce's return to England. He arrived in time to second Mr. Pitt's opposition to the India Bill, and to support him in his memorable struggle against the majority of the House of Commons. The Coalition was now the one subject of popular invective; and, at a public meeting in the Castle-yard at York, in March, 1784, Mr. Wilberforce condemned their measures, in a speech which was received with the loudest applause. The praise of James Boswell is characteristic at once of the speaker and of the critic. In an account of the scene which he transmitted to Mr. Dundas, "I saw," writes Boswell, "what seemed a mere shrimp, mount upon the table, but, as I listened, he grew and grew, until the shrimp became a whale." A still more convincing attestation to his eloquence is to be found in the consequences to which it led. Mr. Wilberforce attended the meeting with the avowed purpose of defeating, at the approaching election, the predominant influence of the great Whig families of Yorkshire, and with the secret design of becoming a candidate for the county. During his speech the cry of "Wilberforce and Liberty" was raised by the crowd; and the transition was obvious and readily made, to "Wilberforce and the Representation of Yorkshire." The current of popular favour flowed strongly in his support. He was the opponent of the Coalition and the India Bill, and the friend and zealous partisan of Mr. Pitt; then rich in hereditary honours, in personal renown, and in the brightest promise. Large subscriptions defrayed the expense of the contest, and, without venturing to the poll, his Whig opponents surrendered to him a seat, which he continued to occupy, without intermission, for many successive Parliaments. With this memorable triumph Mr. Wilberforce closed his twenty-fifth year, and returned to London in possession of whatever could gratify the wishes, or exalt the hopes of a candidate for fame, on the noblest theatre of civil action which the world had thrown open to the ambition of private men.

The time had, however, arrived at which a new direction was to be given to the thoughts and pursuits of this favourite of nature and fortune. Before taking his seat in the House of Commons, as member for the county of York, Mr. Wilberforce, accompanied by some female relations, and by Isaac Milner, the late Dean of Carlisle, undertook a journey to the south of France, and thence through Switzerland to the German Spa. This expedition, interrupted by a temporary return to England, during the winter of 1784–5, continued some months, and forms a memorable era in his life. The lessons which he had learned in childhood at Wimbledon had left an indelible impression on a mind peculiarly susceptible of every tender and profound emotion. The dissipation of his subsequent days had retarded the growth of those seeds of early piety, but had not entirely choked them. To the companions of his youth many indications had occasionally been given, that their gay associate was revolving deeper thoughts than formed the staple of their ordinary social intercourse. These were now to take entire possession of his mind, and to regulate the whole of his future conduct. The opinions of Whitfield had found a more impressive expositor than the good aunt who had originally explained and enforced them.

Isaac Milner was a remarkable man, and but for the early possession of three great ecclesiastical sinecures, which enabled him to gratify his constitutional indolence, would probably have attained considerable distinction in physical and in theological science. In a narrow collegiate circle he exercised a colloquial despotism akin to that which Johnson had established, and to which Parr aspired, amongst the men of letters and the statesmen of their age. But Milner's dogmatism was relieved by a tenderness of heart not inferior to that of the great moralist himself; and was informed by a theology incomparably more profound, and more fitted to practical uses, than that of the redoubted grammarian. He was amongst the dearest of the friends of Mr. Wilberforce, and now became his preceptor and his spiritual guide.

The day dreams on the subject of religious conversions, which they who list may hear on every side, are like other dreams, the types of substantial realities. Though the workings of the Almighty hand are distinctly visible only to the omniscient eye, yet even our narrow faculties can often trace the movements of that perennial under-current which controls the sequences of human life, and imparts to them the character of moral discipline. In the comprehensive scheme of the Supreme Governor of the world for the progressive advancement of the human race, are comprised innumerable subordinate plans for the improvement of the individuals of which it is composed; and whether we conceive of these as the result of some preordained system, or as produced by the immediate interposition of God, we equally acknowledge the doctrine of Divine Providence, and refer to him as the author of those salutary revolutions of human character, of which the reality is beyond dispute. It is a simple matter of fact, of which these volumes afford the most conclusive proof, that, about the twenty-sixth year of his age, Mr. Wilberforce was the subject of such a change; and that it continued for half a century to give an altered direction to his whole system of thought and action. Waiving all discussion as to the mode in which the divine agency may have been employed to accomplish this result, it is more to our purpose to inquire in what the change really consisted, and what were the consequences for which it prepared the way.

The basis of Mr. Wilberforce's natural character was, an intense fellow-feeling with other men. No one more readily adopted the interests, sympathized with the affections, or caught even the transient emotions of those with whom he associated. United to a melancholy temperament, this disposition would have produced a moon-struck and sentimental "Man of Feeling;" but, connected as it was with the most mercurial gayety of heart, the effect was as exhilarating as it was impressive. It was a combination of the deep emotions, real or pretended, of Rousseau, with the restless vivacity of Voltaire. Ever ready to weep with those that wept, his nature still more strongly prompted him to rejoice with those that rejoiced. A passionate lover of society, he might (to adopt, with some little qualification, a well-known phrase) have passed for the brother of every man, and for the lover of every woman with whom he conversed. Bayard himself could not have accosted a damsel of the houses of Longueville or Coligni with a more heartfelt and graceful reverence, than marked his address to every female, however homely or however humble. The most somnolent company was aroused and gladdened at his presence. The heaviest countenance reflected some animation from his eye; nor was any one so dull as not to yield some sparks of intellect when brought into communication with him. Few men ever loved books more, or read them with a more insatiate thirst; yet, even in the solitude of his library, the social spirit never deserted him. The one great object of his studies was, to explore the springs of human action, and to trace their influence on the character and happiness of mankind.

To this vivid sympathy in all human interests and feelings were united the talents by which it could be most gracefully exhibited. Mr. Wilberforce possessed histrionic powers of the highest order. If any caprice of fortune had called him to the stage, he would have ranked amongst its highest ornaments. He would have been irresistible before a jury, and the most popular of preachers. His rich mellow voice, directed by an ear of singular accuracy, gave to his most familiar language a variety of cadence, and to his most serious discourse a depth of expression, which rendered it impossible not to listen. Pathos and drollery—solemn musings and playful fancies—yearnings of the soul over the tragic, and the most contagious mirth over the ludicrous events of life, all rapidly succeeding each other, and harmoniously because unconsciously blended, threw over his conversation a spell which no prejudice, dulness, or ill-humour could resist. The courtesy of the heart, and the refinement of the most polished society, united to great natural courage, and a not ungraceful consciousness of his many titles to respect, completed the charm which his presence infallibly exercised.

To these unrivalled social powers was added a not less remarkable susceptibility of enjoyment, in whatever form it presented itself. The pleasures, such as they are, of a very fastidious taste, he did not cultivate. If Haydn was not to be had, a street ballad would seem to shoot quicksilver through his frame. In the absence of Pitt or Canning, he would delight himself in the talk of the most matter of fact man of his constituents from the Cloth hall at Leeds. With a keen perception of beauty and excellence in nature, literature, and art, the alchymy of his happy frame extracted some delight from the dullest pamphlet, the tamest scenery, and the heaviest speech. The curiosity and the interest of childhood, instead of wearing out as he grew older, seemed to be continually on the increase. This peculiarity is noticed by Sir James Mackintosh, with his accustomed precision and delicacy of touch, in the following words:—"Do you remember Madame de Maintenon's exclamation, 'Oh the misery of having to amuse an old king!—qui n'est pas amusable!' Now, if I was called upon to describe Wilberforce, I should say, he was the most 'amusable' man I ever met with in my life. Instead of having to think what subjects will interest him, it is perfectly impossible to hit on one that does not interest him. I never saw any one who touched life at so many points; and it is the more remarkable in a man who is supposed to live absorbed in the contemplations of a future state. When he was in the House of Commons, he seemed to have the freshest mind of any man there. There was all the charm of youth about him; and he is quite as remarkable in this bright evening of his days as when I saw him in his *glory* many years ago."

Such a temperament, combined with such an education, might have given the assurance of a brilliant career, but hardly of any enduring fame. Ordinary foresight might have predicted that he would be courted or feared by the two great parties in the House of Commons; that he would be at once the idol and the idolator of society; and that he would shine in Parliament, and in the world, in the foremost rank of intellectual voluptuaries. But that he should rise to be amongst the most laborious and eminent benefactors of mankind was beyond the divination of any human sagacity. It is to the mastery which religion acquired over his mind that this elevation is to be ascribed.

It is not wonderful that many have claimed Mr. Wilberforce as the ornament of that particular section of the Christian Church which has assumed or acquired the distinctive title of Evangelical; nor that they should resent as injurious to their party any more catholic view of his real character. That he became the secular head of this body is perfectly true; but no man was ever more exempt from bondage to any religious party. Immutably attached to the cardinal truths of revelation, he was in other respects a latitudinarian. "Strange," he would say, "that Christians have taken as the badge of separation the very Sacrament which their Redeemer instituted as the symbol of their union." And in this spirit, though a strict conformist to the Church of England, he occasionally attended the public worship of those who dissent from her communion, and maintained a cordial fellowship with Christians of every denomination. The opinion may, indeed, be hazarded that he was not profoundly learned in any branch of controversial theology, nor much qualified for success in such studies. His mind had been little trained to systematic investigation either in moral or physical science. Though the practice of rhetoric was the business of his mature life, the study of logic had not been the occupation of his youth. Skepticism and suspended judgment were foreign to his mental habits. Perhaps no man ever examined more anxiously the meaning of the sacred writings, and probably no one ever more readily admitted their authority. Finding in his own bosom ten thousand echoes to the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, he wisely and gladly received this silent testimony to their truth, and gave them a reverential admission. Instead of consuming life in a protracted scrutiny into the basis of his belief, he busied himself in erecting upon it a superstructure of piety and of virtue. In fact, his creed differed little, if at all, from that of the vast majority of Protestants. The difference between him and his fellow Christians consisted chiefly in the uses to which his religious opinions were applied. The reflections which most men habitually avoid he as habitually cherished. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say of him that God was in all his thoughts. He surveyed human life as the eye of an artist ranges over a landscape, receiving innumerable intimations which escape any less practised observer. In every faculty he recognised a sacred trust; in every material object of an indication of the divine wisdom and goodness; in every human being an heir of immortality; in every enjoyment a proof of the divine benignity; in every affliction an act of parental discipline. The early development of this habit of mind appears to have been attended with much dejection and protracted self-denial; but the gay and social spirit of the man gradually resumed its dominion. A piety so profound was never so entirely free from asceticism. It was allied to all the pursuits, and all the innocent pleasures of life,—we might almost say to all its blameless whims and humours. The frolic of earlier days had indeed subsided, and the indestructible gayety of his heart had assumed a more gentle and cautious character. But with a settled peace of mind, and a self-government continually gaining strength, he felt that perfect freedom which enabled him to give the reins to his constitutional vivacity; and the most devotional of men was at the same time the most playful and exhilarating companion. His presence was as fatal to dulness as to immorality. His mirth was as irresistible as the first laughter of childhood.

The sacred principles which he had now adopted were not sufficient entirely to cure those intellectual defects to which a neglected education and the too early enjoyment of wealth and leisure had given the force of inveterate habit. His conversation was remarkable for interminable digressions, and was no inapt index of the desultory temper of his mind. But even this discursive temper was made subservient to the great objects of his life. It exhibited itself in the rapid transitions which he was continually making from one scheme of benevolence to another; and in that singular faculty which he possessed of living at once as the inhabitant of the visible and invisible worlds. From the shadows of earth to the realities of man's future destiny he passed with a facility scarcely attainable to those who have been trained to more continuous habits of application. Between the oratory and the senate—devotional exercises and worldly pursuits—he had formed so intimate a connexion, that the web of his discourse was not rarely composed of very incongruous materials. But this fusion of religious with secular thoughts added to the spirit with which every duty was performed, and to the zest with which every enjoyment was welcomed; and if the want of good mental discipline was perceptible to the last, the triumph of Christianity was but the more conspicuous in that inflexible constancy of purpose with which he pursued the great works of benevolence to which his life was consecrated. No aspirant for the honours of literature, or for the dignities of the woolsack, ever displayed more decision of character than marked his labours for the abolition of the slave trade.

Some notice, however brief, of that great event is indispensable in the most rapid survey of the life of Mr. Wilberforce. The aspirations of his school-boy days on this subject have been already noticed. That early impression was deep and abiding. At the commencement of his parliamentary career, in 1780, his inquiries into the system of colonial slavery had led him to conceive and to avow the hope that he should live to redress the wrongs of the Negro race. The direction of public opinion towards the accomplishment of great political objects is one of those social acts which, during the last half century, has almost assumed the character of a new invention. But the contrast between the magnitude of the design, and the poverty of the resources at his command, might have justified many an anxious foreboding, while, during the following six years, Mr. Wilberforce concerted plans for the abolition of the slave trade with James Ramsey, the first confessor and proto-martyr of the new faith, with Ignatius Latrobe, the missionary, in his lodging in Fetter Lane, or even with Sir Charles and Lady Middleton, at their mansion in Kent. Allies of greater apparent importance were afterwards obtained; and it was when seated with Mr. Pitt, "in conversation in the open air, at the root of an old tree at Holwood, just above the steep descent into the valley of Keston," that Mr. Wilberforce resolved "to give notice, on a fit occasion, in the House of Commons, of his intention to bring the subject forward." The experience of the next twenty years was, however, to convince him that it was not from the eloquent statesman who, for nearly the whole of that period, directed the government of this country, that effectual support must be drawn; but from the persevering energy of men who, like Ramsey and Latrobe, could touch in the bosoms of others those sacred springs of action which were working in their own. Amongst such associates in this holy war are to be mentioned, with peculiar veneration, the names of Granville Sharpe and of Thomas Clarkson. To the former was committed the presidency of the society, charged with the duty of collecting and diffusing information; while Mr. Clarkson became the zealous and indefatigable agent of that body. To Mr. Wilberforce himself was assigned the general superintendence of the cause, both in and out of Parliament.

In 1789, he first proposed the abolition of the slave trade to the House of Commons, in a speech which Burke rewarded with one of those imperishable eulogies which he alone had the skill and the authority to pronounce. But a victory over Guinea merchants was not to be numbered amongst the triumphs of eloquence. Unable to withstand the current of popular feeling which the novelty as much as the nature of the proposal had stirred, they sagaciously resolved to await the subsidence of this unwonted enthusiasm; soliciting only a suspension of the measure until Parliament should be in possession of the facts which they undertook to substantiate. To this Fabian policy, ever changing in its aspect, but uniform in its design, the slave traders were indebted for the prolongation of their guilty commerce. Nearly two years were worn away in the examination of their own witnesses, and when Mr. Wilberforce had, with difficulty, succeeded in transferring the inquiry from the bar of the House of Commons to the less dilatory tribunal of a select committee, he had to struggle laboriously for permission to produce testimony in refutation of the evidence of his antagonists. It was not, therefore, till April, 1791, that the question was directly brought to issue; when a proof was given of the foresight with which the Guinea merchants had calculated on the gradual subsidence of the public indignation. Ominous were the forebodings with which the friends of Mr. Wilberforce looked forward to the approaching debate. By the master of St. John's College, Cambridge, his position was compared to that of "Episcopius in the infamous Synod of Dort;" while John Wesley exhorted him to proceed to the conflict as a new "Athanasius *contra mundum*." They had well divined the temper of the times. The slave traders triumphed by an overwhelming majority. In the political tumults of those days, the voice of humanity was no longer audible, and common sense had ceased to discharge its office. The bad faith and fickleness of the French government had involved St. Domingo in confusion and bloodshed; and because the elements of society had broken loose in that colony, it was judged dangerous to arrest the accumulation of the materials of similar discord within our own! Even Mr. Pitt avowed his opinion that it was wise to await more tranquil times before the slave trade should be abolished. It was in vain that Mr. Wilberforce urged on the House of Commons, in 1792, the true inference from the calamitous state of St. Domingo. His measure for the immediate abolition of the slave trade was again defeated. Those were days in which every change was branded as a revolution—when the most sacred rules of moral or political conduct, if adduced in favour of any reform, were denounced and abhorred as "French principles."

Reason, however, having gradually regained her dominion, the procrastinating system of the slave traders assumed a new shape, and obtained, in the person of Mr. Dundas, its most formidable advocate. With perverse ingenuity, he proposed to substitute a gradual for an immediate abolition; fixing a remote period for the entire cessation of the trade. Yet even in this cautious form the bill found a cold reception in the House of Peers, where, after consuming the session in the examination of two witnesses, their lordships postponed the measure till the following year. With the arrival of that period, Mr. Wilberforce had to sustain three successive defeats. The House of Commons rejected first, the main proposal of an immediate abolition of the trade; then, a motion restricting the number of slaves to be annually imported into our colonies; and, finally, a plan for prohibiting the employment of British capital in the introduction of slaves into foreign settlements. His perseverance, however, was not fruitless. A deep impression had been made by his past efforts; and, in 1794, the House of Commons, for the first time, passed a bill of immediate abolition. The defenders of the slave trade were again rescued from the impending blow by the interposition of the peers; amongst whom a melancholy pre-eminence was thenceforth to be assigned to a member of the royal house, who lived to redeem his early error, by assenting, in the decline of life, to the introduction of the law for the abolition of slavery.

Thus far the difficulties of the contest had chiefly arisen from the influence or the arts of his enemies; but Mr. Wilberforce had now to sustain the more depressing weight of the secession of one of his most effective auxiliaries. Suffering under nervous debility, and influenced by other motives, of which an explanation is to be found in his "History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade," Mr. Clarkson was reluctantly compelled to retire from the field. With what deep regret he abandoned the contest may be learnt from his own volumes; and earnest as must have been his aspiration for its success, he was unable, during the eleven years which followed, to resume his place amidst the champions of the cause, though he lived to witness and to share in the triumph.

Providence had gifted Mr. Wilberforce with greater nervous energy; and though sustaining labours not less severe, and a public responsibility incomparably more anxious than that under which the health of his colleague had given way, he returned to the conflict with unabated resolution. In 1795, and in the following year, he again laboured in vain to induce the House of Commons to resume the ground which they had already taken; nor could his all-believing charity repress the honest indignation with which he records that a body of his supporters, sufficient to have carried the bill, had been enticed from their places in the House, by the new opera of the "Two Hunchbacks," in which a conspicuous part was assigned to the great vocalist of that day, Signior Portugallo. A rivalry more formidable even than that of the Hay-Market had now arisen. Parodying his father's celebrated maxim, Mr. Pitt was engaged in conquering Europe in the West Indies; and, with the acquisition of new colonies, the slave trade acquired an increased extent, and its supporters had obtained augmented parliamentary interest. The result was to subject Mr. Wilberforce, in the debate of 1797, to a defeat more signal than any of those which he had hitherto endured. His opponents eagerly seized this opportunity to render it irreparable. On the motion of Mr. Charles Ellis, an address to the crown was carried, which transferred to the legislative bodies of the different colonies the task of preparing for the very measure which they had leagued together to frustrate. It was with extreme difficulty, and not without the most strenuous remonstrances, that Mr. Wilberforce dissuaded Mr. Pitt from lending his support to this extravagant project. To increase the value of his Transatlantic conquests, he had thrown open the intercourse between our colonies and those of Spain, and had offered, in the newly acquired islands, fresh lands, on which the slave traders might effect further settlements; and though, by ceaseless importunity, Mr. Wilberforce obtained the revocation of the first of these measures, and the suspension of the second, yet the cupidity of the slave traders, and their influence in the national councils were largely increased by these new prospects of gain. Their augmented powers were attested by ill success which attended Mr. Wilberforce's annual motions in 1798 and 1799.

The contest had now endured for twelve years. Ten successive efforts had been fruitlessly made to obtain the concurrence of the legislature in arresting this gigantic evil. Hopeless of success by perseverance in the same tactics, and yet incapable of retiring from the duty he had assumed, Mr. Wilberforce now addressed himself to the project of effecting, by a compromise, the end which seemed unattainable by direct and open hostilities. The year 1800 was accordingly consumed in negotiations with the chief West India proprietors, of which the object was to win their concurrence in limiting the duration of the trade to a period of five or at most seven years. Delusive hopes of success cheered him for awhile, but it was ere long apparent that the phalanx of his enemies were too firm to be penetrated. The peace of Amiens had brought to the court of London a minister from the French republic, who encouraged the hope that it might be possible to arrange a general convention of all the European powers for the abandonment of the traffic. Long and anxious were the endeavours made by Mr. Wilberforce for maturing this project. It is needless to say that they were unavailing. The season of 1801 was about to close, and the end in view appeared more distant than at any former time. Mr. Addington seems to have regarded the great expedition to St. Domingo as a kind of sedative, which would paralyze the resistance of the oppressed negroes throughout the West Indies; and feared to check the operation of this anodyne. The charm which these medical analogies exercised over the then occupant of the treasury bench, did not, however, extend its influence to Mr. Wilberforce. He announced his purpose to resume the parliamentary contest in the year 1802, when the attempt was accordingly made, though under the most discouraging circumstances. The wit and eloquence of Mr. Canning, remonstrating against the settlement of new lands in Trinidad, had been repelled by the passive resistance of the then minister, and the time occupied in this discussion had delayed, until the dissolution of Parliament interrupted the further progress of the Abolition Act. The tumult of war in the succeeding year silenced every other sound; and the advocate of the slaves was condemned to a reluctant silence, whilst every voice was raised in reprobation of Bonaparte, and in resentment for the insult offered to Lord Whitworth. At length the auguries of success became distinct and frequent. Mr. Pitt had returned to office, the dread of Jacobinism no longer haunted the public mind, but above all, the proprietors in the Carribbean Islands had made the discovery, that by encouraging the slave trade, they were creating in the planters of the conquered colonies the most dangerous rivals in the monopoly of the British market. The union with Ireland had added a new host of friends. Not a single representation from that country withheld his assistance. Amidst all these encouragements, Mr. Wilberforce again appealed to the House of Commons, and carried the bill with overwhelming majorities. Cordial were now the congratulations of his friends, of every class, from the aged John Newton, of St. Mary Woolnoth, to Jeremy Bentham, whose celebrity as the most original thinker of his age was then in its early dawn. But the peers had not yet yielded to the influence of Christian or moral philosophy. "The debate," says Mr. Wilberforce's Diary, "was opened by the chancellor in a very threatening speech, because overrating property, and full of all moral blunders. He showed himself to labour with feelings as if he was the legitimate guardian of property—Lord Stanhope's a wild speech—Lord Hawkesbury spoke honourably and handsomely.—Westmoreland like himself, coarse and bullying, but not without talent. Grenville spoke like a man of high and honourable principles, who, like a truly great statesman, regarded right and politic as identical." Blunders and bullying, however, prevailed; and the question was adjourned to the following session.

Before its arrival, Lord Brougham, then travelling on the continent as an American, and even "venturing to pass a week in the same house with several French generals," had offered Mr. Wilberforce his assistance in pursuing various collateral inquiries throughout Holland and Germany, and in "the great scenes of bondage (as it is called) Poland, Russia, and Hungary." To this most potent ally many others were added. Mr. Stephen and Mr. Macaulay were unremitting in the use of the pen and press. The classical knowledge of Mr. Robert Grant was put under contribution, to illustrate the state of slavery in the ancient world; and even the daughters of Lord Muncaster were enlisted in the service of methodizing the contents of all African travels, ancient and modern. High and sanguine as were the hopes of Mr. Wilberforce, he had yet another disappointment to sustain. The House of Commons of 1805 receding from their former resolutions, rejected his bill, and drew from him in his private journals, language of distress and pain such as no former defeat had been able to extort.

The death of Mr. Pitt approached; an event which the most calm and impartial judgment must now regard as the necessary precursor of the liberation of Africa. For seventeen years since the commencement of the contest, he had guided the councils of this country. Successful in almost every other parliamentary conflict, and triumphing over the most formidable antagonists, he had been compelled, by the Dundases and Jenkinsons, and Roses, who on every other subject quailed under his eye, to go to the grave without obliterating that which he himself had denounced as the deepest stain on our national character, and the most enormous guilt recorded in the history of mankind. During that long period, millions of innocent victims had perished. Had he perilled his political existence on the issue, no rational man can doubt that an amount of guilt, of misery, of disgrace, and of loss, would have been spared to England, and to the civilized world, such as no other man ever had it in his power to arrest.

The political antagonists of Mr. Pitt were men of a different temper; and although in the cabinet of Mr. Fox there were not wanting those who opposed him on this subject, yet it was an opposition, which, in the full tide of success, he could afford to disregard and to pardon. Had it endangered for a single session the abolition of the slave trade, these names, eminent as one at least of them was, would infallibly have been erased from the list of his administration. Mr. Fox's ministry had scarcely taken their places when Lord Grenville introduced into the House of Lords, and speedily carried two bills, of which the first abolished the slave trade with all foreign powers, and the second forbade the employment in that traffic of any British shipping which had not already been engaged in it; whilst the House of Commons, resolved that the slave trade was "contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy; and that they would proceed to abolish it with all practicable expedition." Faithfully was this pledge redeemed. The death of Mr. Fox did not even delay its fulfilment. Early in 1807 that great statesman, to whom at the distance of twenty-six years it was reserved to propose the abolition of slavery itself, introduced into the House of Commons a bill which placed on the British statute-book the final condemnation of the trade in slaves. Amidst the acclamations of Parliament, the enthusiastic congratulations of his friends, and the applauses of the world, Mr. Wilberforce witnessed the success of the great object of his life with emotions, and in a spirit, which could not have found admission into a mind less pure and elevated than his own. The friendly shouts of victory which arose on every side were scarcely observed or heeded in the delightful consciousness of having rendered to mankind a service of unequalled magnitude. He retired to prostrate himself before the Giver of all good things, in profound humility and thankfulness,—wondering at the unmerited bounty of God, who had carried him through twenty years of unremitting labour, and bestowed on him a name of imperishable glory.

There are those who have disputed his title to the station thus assigned to him. Amongst the most recent is to be numbered one whose esteem is of infinitely too high value to be lightly disregarded, and whose judgment will carry with it no common authority. Mr. Sergeant Talfourd, in his life of Charles Lamb, referring to an interview which took place between Lamb and Mr. Clarkson, uses the following expressions:—"There he also met with the true annihilator of the slave trade, Thomas Clarkson, who was then enjoying a necessary respite from his stupendous labours in a cottage on the borders of Ulswater. Lamb had no taste for oratorical philanthropy, but he felt the grandeur and simplicity of Clarkson's character."

The contrast which is thus drawn between "the true annihilator of the slave trade," and the oratorical philanthropist who declaimed against it, does not rest merely on the authority of Mr. Talfourd. The great names of Wordsworth and Southey, with many minor writers, may be quoted in support of the same opinion. Nay, Mr. Clarkson has claimed for himself a place in the history of this great measure which affords no light countenance to the pretensions thus preferred in his behalf. In a map prefixed to his "History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade," that gigantic evil is represented under the image of a mound placed at the confluence of four rivers, whose united force is bearing it away. Of these streams one takes, near its source, the name of Clarkson, into which the rivulet of Wilberforce is seen to fall much lower down. His sons reclaim against this hydrography, and propose to correct the map by converting the tributary flood into the main channel. The discussion has, we think, been inevitably forced upon them; but it is one into which we decline to enter. It may be sufficient to state what are the positions which the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce have asserted, and, as we think, substantiated. They maintain, then, that his attention had been directed to the abolition of the slave trade for some time before the subject had engaged Mr. Clarkson's notice—that he had been co-operating with Mr. Pitt for the advancement of the measure long before his acquaintance with Mr. Clarkson commenced, and for at least two years before the period at which Mr. Clarkson takes to himself the credit of having made a convert of that great minister—that many of Mr. Clarkson's exertions were undertaken at the instance and at the expense of Mr. Wilberforce, and conducted under his written instructions,—and that from 1794 to 1805, when the victory was already won, Mr. Clarkson did not in fact participate at all in any of the labours which were unceasingly pursued by Mr. Wilberforce during the whole of that period. Thus far there seems no ground for dispute. In these volumes will be found a correspondence, the publication of which we cannot condemn, although we think that nothing but the filial duty of vindicating their father's highest title to renown could have justified his sons in giving it to the world. The effect of it is to show that Mr. Clarkson's services were remunerated by a large subscription; and that his private interests on this occasion were urged on Mr. Wilberforce with an importunity of which it would be painful to transfer the record to these pages. Remembering the advanced age, the eminent services, and the spotless character of that venerable and excellent man, we must be permitted to express our very deep regret that the ill-judged encomiums of his friends should have contributed to the publication of any thing which could for a moment disturb the serenity of the closing scenes of a life distinguished, as we believe, by the exercise of every social and domestic virtue, and the most unwearied beneficence to men of every condition and every country.

Quitting the unwelcome contrast thus forced upon us, it is due to the memory of Mr. Wilberforce to state, that no man ever so little merited that condemnation which the language of Mr. Talfourd must be supposed to convey. He was indeed associated with those whose aid would have insured the triumph of energies incomparably inferior to his. To mention no humbler names, he was aided by the genius and philanthropy of Henry Brougham, and by the affection and self-denial and unexampled energy of his brother-in-law Mr. Stephen, and of Mr. Zachary Macaulay. It may farther be admitted, that systematic and very continuous labours were not consonant with his intellectual character or with the habits of his life. But to the office which he had undertaken, he brought qualifications still more rare, and of far higher importance. It was within the reach of ordinary talents to collect, to examine, and to digest evidence, and to prepare and distribute popular publications. But it required a mind as versatile and active, and powers as varied as were those of Mr. Wilberforce, to harmonize all minds, to quicken the zeal of some, and to repress the intemperance of others;—to negotiate with statesmen of all political parties, and, above all, to maintain for twenty successive years the lofty principles of the contest unsullied even by the seeming admixture of any lower aims. The political position assigned to him by his constituency in Yorkshire, the multitude and intimacy of his personal friendships, the animal spirits which knew no ebb, the insinuating graces of his conversation, the graceful flow of his natural eloquence, and an address at once the gayest, the most winning, and the most affectionate, marked him out as the single man of his age, to whom it would have been possible to conduct such a struggle through all its ceaseless difficulties and disappointments.—These volumes abound in proofs the most conclusive that, not merely in the House of Commons, but in every other society, he lived for this great object—that he was the centre of a vast correspondence, employing and directing innumerable agents—enlisting in his service the whole circle of his connexions, surrounded by a body of secretaries (called by Mr. Pitt his "white negroes,") preparing or revising publications of every form, from folios of reports and evidence to newspaper paragraphs—engaged in every collateral project by which his main end could be promoted—now superintending the deliberations of the Voluntary Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade,—and then labouring from session to session in parliamentary committees, and occasionally passing (in opposition to his natural temper) weeks of the most laborious seclusion, to prepare himself for his most public labours. A life of more devoted diligence has scarcely been recorded of any man; unless, indeed, we are to understand all mental industry as confined to those exertions which chain the labourer to his desk.

Though Mr. Wilberforce survived the abolition of the slave trade for more than twenty-five years, he did not retain his seat in the House of Commons for much more than half of that period. The interval between the enactment of this law, and the close of his parliamentary labours, was devoted to a ceaseless watchfulness over the interests of the African race. Our space forbids us to pursue in any detail the history of those exertions. But it is important to notice, that although declining strength compelled him to relinquish to others the chief conduct of the warfare against slavery itself, his efforts for its extinction were continued in every form, until the introduction into Parliament, of the law which declared, that from the 1st of August, 1834, "slavery should be utterly, and for ever abolished, and unlawful throughout the British colonies, possessions, and plantations abroad." The measure had already been received with acclamation in the House of Commons, ere he was summoned to his final reward; and it was one of the subjects of the last conversation in which he ever engaged.

It would have not been compatible with the character of Mr. Wilberforce, nor a fulfilment of the mission with which he believed himself to be invested, if he had concentrated his efforts for the good of mankind on any single object, however arduous. "God has set before me the reformation of my country's manners," is the solemn persuasion which he recorded in his twenty-seventh year, and from which, to the last hour of his life, he never swerved. During that period Great Britain underwent internal changes more important than had occurred during any two preceding centuries. Agriculture, commerce, manufactures, revenue, and population expanded with unexampled elasticity. Never before had the physical powers of nature been so largely subjugated to the physical wants of mankind, and never was the necessity more urgent for some corresponding increase of the moral powers of the conqueror. The steam-engine would have been a curse rather than a blessing, if the age which it has enriched had continued stationary in religious and intellectual improvement. Watt and Arkwright would have been but equivocal benefactors of their fellow-countrymen without the co-operation of Bell and Lancaster. England would have used like a giant the giant's strength which she was acquiring. Wealth and sensuality, hard-heartedness, on the one side, must have been brought into a fearful conflict with poverty, ignorance, and discontent, on the other. But the result has been otherwise, and these islands have become not merely the hive of productive industry, but the centre of efforts of unequalled magnitude to advance the highest interests of the human race. If in elevating the moral and religious character of our people during the last century, the first place be due to the illustrious founder of methodism, the second may be justly claimed for Mr. Wilberforce. No two men can be named who in their respective generations exercised an influence so extensive, permanent, and beneficial over public opinion. In walks of life the most dissimilar, and by means widely different, they concurred in proposing to themselves the same great end, and pursued it in the same spirit. Their views of Christian doctrine scarcely differed. They inculcated the same severe, though affectionate, morality; and were animated by the same holy principles, fervent zeal, and constitutional hilarity of temper. No one who believes that the courses of the world are guided by a supreme and benevolent intelligence, will hesitate to admit, that each of these men was appointed by Providence to execute a high and sacred trust, and prepared for its discharge by those gifts of nature and fortune which the circumstances of their times peculiarly demanded. The career of Wesley has been celebrated by the generous enthusiasm of his disciples, and the colder, though more discriminating admiration of Southey. In these volumes is to be found a record not less impressive of the labours of Mr. Wilberforce to exalt and purify the national character. Amongst the innumerable schemes of benevolence which were projected during the last half century, there is scarcely one of the more considerable in which he does not appear to have largely participated. Now establishing schools for pupils of every age, and Christians of all denominations, and then engaged in plans for the circulation of the Scriptures, and the diffusion of Christian knowledge. The half-civilized inhabitants of the recesses of London, the prisoners in her jails, the sick and destitute in their crowded lodgings, the poor of Ireland, the heathen nations refined or barbarous, the convicts in New Holland, and the Indians on the Red river, all in their turn, or rather all at once, were occupying his mind, exhausting his purse, and engaging his time and influence for schemes for their relief or improvement. The mere enumeration of the plans in which he was immersed, and of the societies formed for their accomplishment, presents such a mass and multitude of complicated affairs, as inevitably to suggest the conclusion that no one man, nor indeed any hundred men, could conduct or understand, or remember, them all. There is, however, no miracle to explain. Living in the centre of political action, and surrounded by innumerable friends, agents, and supporters, Mr. Wilberforce was relieved from all the more toilsome duties of these countless undertakings. He may be said to have constituted himself, and to have been acknowledged, by others, as a voluntary minister of public instruction and public charities. No department in Downing street was ever administered with equal success; none certainly by agents equally zealous, persevering, and effective. His authority was maintained by the reverence and affection of his fellow-labourers, and by the wisdom of his counsels, his unfailing bounty, and his ever ready and affectionate sympathy.

No man was less liable to the imputation of withdrawing from costly personal sacrifices to promote those schemes of philanthropy which the world, or at least his own world, would admire and celebrate. During a large part of his life, Mr. Wilberforce appears to have devoted to acts of munificence and charity, from a fourth to a third of his annual income; nor did he shrink from the humblest and most repulsive offices of kindness to the sick and the wretched with whom he was brought into contact. Yet we believe that no more genuine proof was ever given of his anxiety for the highest interests of mankind than in the publication of his "Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes of this Country, contrasted with real Christianity." This book appeared in 1797. The interest with which it was originally received might be readily explained by the singularity of a very conspicuous member of Parliament undertaking to handle such a theme. But there must be some deeper cause for the continued popularity of an octavo volume, of which, within half a century, fifty large editions, at the least, have been published in England and in the United States. The applauses of ecclesiastics of every class, from old John Newton to the then bishop of London, might be yielded with liberal indulgence to so powerful and unexpected an auxiliary.—But that could be no common production which moved the author of the "Pursuits of Literature" for once to quit his stilts, and to pour out a heartfelt tribute of praise in his unadulterated mother tongue; and which drew from Edmund Burke his grateful acknowledgments to the author for the comfort which he had diffused over the two last days of his eventful life.

Yet they who shall search this book for deep theology, or profound investigation, will be disappointed. "Philosophy," says Abraham Tucker, "may yet be styled the art of marshalling the ideas in the understanding, and religion that of disciplining the imagination." In the first of these arts Mr. Wilberforce did not excel; in the second he has scarcely ever been surpassed. The first three chapters of this work appear to us decidedly inferior to the rest. He is there upon a debatable land,—contrasting the inspired text with the prevalent opinions of his age on some parts of Christian doctrine. The accuracy of his own interpretations, or rather of those which are received by that part of the church of England usually designated as evangelical, being assumed throughout these discussions, they will scarcely convince such as read the New Testament in a different sense. But when he emerges from these defiles, and enters upon broader grounds, comparing the precepts of revelation with the conventional morality of the world's favoured children, he speaks (for it is throughout a spoken rather than a written style) with a persuasive energy which breathes the very spirit of the inspired volume. Here all is the mature result of profound meditation; and his thoughts, if not always methodical and compact, are at least always poured out in language so earnest and affectionate, that philanthropy never yet assumed a more appropriate, or a more eloquent style. It is the expostulation of a brother. Unwelcome truth is delivered with scrupulous fidelity, and yet with a tenderness which demonstrates that the monitor feels the pain which he reluctantly inflicts. It is this tone of human sympathy breathing in every page which constitutes the essential charm of this book; and it is to the honour of our common nature that we are all disposed to love best that teacher, who, with the deepest compassion for our sorrows, has the least indulgence for the errors or the faults by which they have been occasioned. Whatever objections may have been raised to Mr. Wilberforce's theological opinions, there is but one which can be stated to the exegetical part of his treatise. It is, that he has erected a standard too pure and too sublime for this world's use, and proposes a scheme of Utopian perfection which is calculated, by discouraging hope, to repress exertion. The obvious answer is, that the design of every rule which can be given for the conduct of life is to afford an accurate measure of our deflection from the path of duty, and a trustworthy guide for our return. Any system of religion or ethics which tolerated the slightest compromise with moral evil, would be so far subversive of its own purpose; although it is from the general prevalence of moral evil that such systems derive their existence and their value. To mark distinctly the departure of the luxurious, busy, care-worn, and ambitious age to which we belong, from the theory and practice of Christian morality, was the task which Mr. Wilberforce proposed to himself. Never were the sensuality, the gloom, and the selfishness which fester below the polished surface of society, brought into more vivid contrast with the faith, and hope, and charity, which in their combination form the Christian character; and never was that contrast drawn with a firmer hand, with a more tender spirit, or with a purer inspiration for the happiness of mankind.

To all these philanthropic labours were added others, addressed, though less directly, to the same ends, and undertaken and pursued in a similar spirit. In his political career, Mr. Wilberforce never ceased to act and to speak as one to whom Providence had confided the sacred trust of advancing the moral character, and promoting the welfare of the age and nation to which he belonged. As a public speaker, he enjoyed great and well-merited celebrity. But it was not in the House of Commons that his powers in this kind were exhibited to the greatest advantage. In all the deliberations of Parliament may be discerned a tacit reference to the nature of royal citation which has brought together the two houses "for the despatch of divers weighty and urgent affairs." The knights and burgesses are emphatically men of business, and have but little indulgence for any thing which tasks the understanding, addresses itself to the heart, or elevates the imagination;—least of all for ostentatious display of the resources of the speaker's mind. He who can contribute a pertinent fact, or a weighty argument, need not raise his style above the region of the pathos. The aspirant for fame must excel in perspicuity of statement, in promptitude in the exposure or invention of sophistry, and in a ready though abstemious use of wit, ridicule, and sarcasm. In these requisites for success, Mr. Wilberforce was deficient. He had not much statistical knowledge, nor was he familiar with any branch of political economy. His argumentation was not usually perspicuous, and was seldom energetic. The habit of digression, the parenthetical structure of his periods, and the minute qualifications suggested by his reverence for truth, impeded the flow of his discourse, and frequently obscured its design. His exquisite perception of the ridiculous kept him in the exercise of habitual self-denial, and, the satire which played upon his countenance was suppressed by his universal charity, before it could form itself into language. With these disadvantages he was still a great parliamentary speaker; and there were occasions when, borne by some sudden impulse, or carried by diligent preparation over the diffuseness which usually encumbered him, he delighted and subdued his hearers. His reputation in the House of Commons rested, however, chiefly upon other grounds. In that assembly, any one speaks with immense advantage whose character, station, or presumed knowledge is such as to give importance to his opinions. The dogmas of some men are of incomparably more value than the logic of others; and no member except the leaders of the great contending parties, addressed the house with an authority equal to that of Mr. Wilberforce. The homage rendered to his personal character, his command over a small compact party, his representation of the county of York, the confidence of the great religious bodies in every part of England, and, above all, his independent neutrality, gave to his suffrage, an almost unexampled value. It was usually delivered with a demeanour of conscious dignity, unalloyed by the slighest tinge of arrogance, and contrasting oddly enough with the insignificance of his slight and shapeless person. Yet the spell he exercised was partly drawn from still another source. Parliamentary eloquence is essentially colloquial; and, when most embellished or sustained, is rather prolonged discourse than oratory properly so called. It was by a constant, perhaps unavoidable observance of his tone, that Mr. Wilberforce exercised the charm which none could resist, but which many were unable to explain. His speeches in the House of Commons bore the closest resemblance to his familiar conversation. There was the same earnest sincerity of manner, the same natural and varied cadences, the same animation and ease, and the same tone of polished society; and while his affectionate, lively, and graceful talk flowed on without the slightest appearance of effort or study, criticism itself scarcely perceived, or at least excused the redundancy of his language.

But, as we have said, it was not in the House of Commons, that his powers as a public speaker had their highest exercise. His habitual trains of thought, and the feelings which he most deeply cherished, could rarely find utterance in that scene of strife and turmoil. At the hustings, where the occasion justified the use of a more didactic style, there was much simple majesty in the uncompromising avowal of his principles, and in the admonitions suggested by them. It was the grave eloquence of the pulpit applied to secular uses. But it was in the great assemblages held for religious and charitable objects that the current of his eloquence moved with the greatest impetus and volume. Here he at once felt his way to the hearts of the dense mass of eager and delighted listeners. In the fulness of the charity which believeth all things, giving credit to the multitude for feelings as pure and benevolent as his own, he posssessed the power of gracefully and decorously laying aside the reserve which habitually shrouded from the irreverent and profane the more secret and cherished feelings of his heart. Nothing was ever more singular, or less framed upon any previous model of eloquence, than were some of those addresses in which the chastened style of the House of Commons (of all assemblies the most fastidious) was employed to give utterance to thoughts which, though best becoming the deepest solitude, retained, even in these crowded scenes, their delicacy not less than their beauty. The most ardent of his expressions bore the impress of indubitable sincerity, and of calm and sober conviction; instantly distinguishing them from the less genuine enthusiasm of others who dissolved their meaning in ecstasy, and soared beyond the reach of human comprehension into the third heavens of artificial rapture. It was an example perhaps as full of danger as of interest; and not a few are the offensive imitations which have been attempted of a model which could be followed successfully, or even innocently, by none whose bosoms did not really burn with the same heavenly affections, who did not practise the same severe observance of truth, or whose taste had not been refined to the same degree of sensibility.

No part of Mr. Wilberforce's biography will be read with greater interest than that which describes his political career. Holding for forty-three years a conspicuous place in the House of Commons, the current of public affairs as it flowed past him, reflected his character in a thousand different forms; and exhibited on the most tumultuous theatre of action, the influence of those sacred principles, with the workings of which we are for the most part conversant only in more quiet and secluded scenes.

"From any one truth all truth may be inferred,"—a Baconian text, from which certain commentators of the last century concluded, that he who possessed a Bible might dispense with Grotius and with Locke; and that at the approach of the Scriptures all other writings should disappear, as they had once vanished at the presence of the Koran. The opinion which precisely reverses this doctrine is recommended by less ingenuity, and by no better logic. Mr. Wilberforce was far too wise a man to imagine that any revelation from God could be designed to supersede the duty of patient research into all other sources of knowledge. But neither did he ever reject the vast body of ethical precepts delivered by divine inspiration, as irrelevant to the political questions with which he was daily conversant. He invariably brought every conclusion drawn from other studies to the test of their consistency with the sacred oracles. They supplied him with an ordinate by which to measure every curve. They gave him what most public men egregiously want,—the firm hold of a body of unchanging opinions. In his case this advantage was peculiarly momentous. His neglected education, his inaptitude for severe and continuous mental labour, the strength of his sympathies, and his strong personal attachment to Mr. Pitt, all seemed to give the promise of a ductile, vacillating, uncertain course. Yet in reality no man ever pursued in Parliament a career more entirely guided by fixed principles, or more frequently at variance with his habitual inclinations. His connexions, both public and private, not less than his natural temper, disposed him to that line of policy which, in our days, assumes the title of "conservative;" yet his conduct was almost invariably such as is now distinguished by the epithets "liberal and reforming." A Tory by predilection, he was in action a Whig. His heart was with Mr. Pitt; but on all the cardinal questions of the times, his vote was given to Mr. Fox.

This conflict of sentiment with principle did not, however, commence in the earlier days of Mr. Pitt's administration; for the mortal foe of Jacobinism entered the House of Commons as a parliamentary reformer; and Mr. Wilberforce executed a rapid journey from Nice to London in the winter of 1784 to support, by his eloquence and his vote, the Reform Bill which his friend introduced in the session of that year. The following broken sentences from his diary record the result: "At Pitt's all day—it goes on well—sat up late chatting with Pitt—his hopes of the country and noble patriotic heart—to town—Pitt's—house—parliamentary reform—terribly disappointed and beat—extremely fatigued—spoke extremely ill, but commended—called at Pitt's—met poor Wyvill." Of this "ill-spoken but commended speech," the following sentence is preserved: "The consequence of this measure," he said, "will be that the freedom of opinion will be restored, and party connexions in a great measure vanish, for party on one side begets party on the other;"—a prophecy which, rightly understood, is perceptibly advancing towards its fulfilment. The ill success of Mr. Pitt's proposal did not damp the zeal of Mr. Wilberforce. He introduced into the House of Commons, and even succeeded in carrying there two of the most important enactments of the Reform Bill, in which, at the distance of nearly half a century, Lord Grey obtained the reluctant concurrence of the peers. One of these measures provided for a general registration of voters; the others for holding the poll, at the same time, in several different parts of the same county.

From the commencement of the war with France is to be dated the dissolution of the political alliance which had, till then, been maintained with little interruption between Mr. Wilberforce and Mr. Pitt. Partaking more deeply than most men of the prevalent abhorrence of the revolutionary doctrines of that day, Mr. Wilberforce's resistance to the war was decided and persevering. A written message from Mr. Pitt, delivered on the first debate on that question, "assuring him that his speaking then might do irreparable mischief, and promising that he should have another opportunity before war should be declared," defeated his purpose of protesting publicly against the approaching hostilities. Accident prevented the redemption of the pledge, but Mr. Wilberforce's purposes remained unshaken. "Our government," he says in a letter on this subject, "had been, for some months before the breaking out of the war, negotiating with the principal European powers, for the purpose of obtaining a joint representation to France, assuring her that if she would formally engage to keep within her limits, and not molest her neighbours, she should be suffered to settle her own internal government and constitution without interference. I never was so earnest with Mr. Pitt on any occasion as I was in my entreaties before the war broke out, that he would openly declare in the House of Commons that he had been, and then was negotiating this treaty. I urged on him that the declaration might possibly produce an immediate effect in France, where it was manifest there prevailed an opinion that we were meditating some interference with their internal affairs, and the restoration of Louis to his throne. At all events, I hoped that in the first lucid interval, France would see how little reason there was for continuing the war with Great Britain; and, at least, the declaration must silence all but the most determined oppositionists in this country. How far this expectation would have been realized you may estimate by Mr. Fox's language when Mr. Pitt, at my instance, did make the declaration last winter (1799.) 'If,' he said, 'the right honourable gentleman had made the declaration now delivered, to France, as well as to Russia, Austria, and Prussia, I should have nothing more to say or to desire.'"

Experience and reflection confirmed these original impressions. After the war had continued for a year, Mr. Wilberforce was engaged in making up his mind cautiously and maturely, and, therefore, slowly as to the best conduct to be observed by Great Britain in the present critical emergency. With what a severe self-examination he was accustomed to conduct these inquiries, may be learnt from an entry made at that period in his private journal. "It is a proof to me of my secret ambition, that though I foresee how much I shall suffer in my feelings throughout from differing from Pitt, and how indifferent a figure I shall most likely make, yet that motives of ambition will insinuate themselves. Give me, O Lord, a true sense of the comparative value of earthly and of heavenly things; this will render me sober-minded, and fix my affections on things above."

Such was the solemn preparation with which he approached this momentous question, and moved in the session of 1794 an amendment to the address recommending a more pacific policy. The failure of that attempt did not shake his purpose; for after the interval of a few days he voted with Mr. Grey on a direct motion for the re-establishment of peace. The genuine self-denial with which this submission to a clear sense of duty was attended, Mr. Wilberforce has thus touchingly described: "No one who has not seen a good deal of public life, and felt how difficult and painful it is to differ widely from those with whom you wish to agree, can judge at what an expense of feeling such duties are performed. Wednesday, February 4, dined at Lord Camden's. Pepper, and Lady Arden, Steele, &c. I felt queer, and all day out of spirits—wrong! but hurt by the idea of Pitt's alienation—12th, party of *the old firm* at the Speaker's! I not there."

Mr. Pitt's alienation was not the only, nor the most severe penalty which Mr. Wilberforce had to pay on this occasion. The sarcasms of Windham,—the ironical compliments of Burke,—a cold reception from the king,—and even Fox's congratulation upon his approaching alliance with the opposition, might have been endured. But it was more hard to bear the rebukes, however tenderly conveyed, of his friend and early guide, the dean of Carlisle; the reproaches of the whole body of his clerical allies for the countenance which they conceived him to have given to the enemies of religion and of order; and the earnest remonstrances of many of his most powerful supporters in Yorkshire. The temper so accessible to all kindly influences, was, however, sustained by the invigorating voice of an approving conscience. He resumed his pacific proposals in the spring of 1795, and though still defeated, it was by a decreasing majority. Before the close of that year, Mr. Pitt himself had become a convert to the opinions of his friend. The war had ceased to be popular, and Lord Malmesbury's negotiation followed. The failure of that attempt at length convinced Mr. Wilberforce that the war was inevitable; and thenceforward his opposition to it ceased.

The same independent spirit raised him, on less momentous occasions, above the influence of the admiration and strong personal attachment which he never withheld from Mr. Pitt at any period of their lives. Though the minister was "furious" on the occasion, he voted and spoke against the motion for augmenting the income of the Prince of Wales. Though fully anticipating the ridicule which was the immediate consequence of the attempt, he moved the House of Commons to interfere for the liberation of Lafayette, when confined in the jail of Olmuky. Though, at the suggestion of Bishop Prettyman, Mr. Pitt pledged himself to introduce a bill which would have silenced every dissenting minister to whom the magistrates might have thought proper to refuse a license, Mr. Wilberforce resisted, and with eventful success, this encroachment on the principles of toleration. Though the whole belligerent policy of Mr. Pitt, on the resumption of the war, rested on continental alliances, cemented by subsidies from the British treasury, that system found in Mr. Wilberforce the most strenuous and uncompromising opponent. On the revival of hostilities in 1803, he supported Mr. Fox not merely with his vote, but with a speech which he subsequently published. The impeachment of Lord Melville brought him into a direct and painful hostility to those with whom he had lived in youthful intimacy, and who still retained their hold on his heart. Mr. Pitt was his chosen friend—Lord Melville his early companion. But even on this occasion, though compelled to watch the movements of the "fascinating eye" and "the agitated countenance" turned reproachfully to him from the treasury bench, he delivered one of the most memorable of his parliamentary speeches,—in which the sternest principles of public morality were so touchingly combined with compassion for the errors he condemned, that the effect was irresistible; and the casting vote of the speaker can scarcely be said with greater truth to have determined the decision of the house. Nothing more truly in the spirit of the pure and lofty principles by which he was guided is recorded of him, than his defence to the charge of inconsistency for declining to join the deputation which carried up to the king the subsequent address for the removal of Lord Melville from the royal councils. "I am a little surprised that it should be imputed as a fault to any that they did not accompany the procession to St. James's. I should have thought that men's own feelings might have suggested to them that it was a case in which the heart might be permitted to give a lesson to the judgment. My country might justly demand that, in my decision on Lord Melville's conduct, I should be governed by the rules of justice, and the principles of the constitution, without suffering party considerations, personal friendship, or any extrinsic motive whatever to interfere; that in all that was substantial I should deem myself as in the exercise of a judicial office. But when the sentence of the law is past, is not that sufficient? Am I to join in the execution of it? Is it to be expected of me that I am to stifle the natural feelings of the heart, and not even to shed a tear over the very sentence I am pronouncing? I know not what Spartan virtue or stoical pride might require; but I know that I am taught a different, ay, and a better lesson by a greater than either Lycurgus or Zeno. Christianity enforces no such sacrifice. She requires us indeed to do justice, but to love mercy. I learnt not in her school to triumph even over a conquered enemy, and must I join the triumph over a fallen friend?"

We might, with the aid of these volumes, trace Mr. Wilberforce's political career through all the memorable controversies of his times, and prove, beyond the reach of contradiction, that every vote was given under such a sense of responsibility to the Supreme Lawgiver as raised him above the influence of those human affections, which scarcely any man felt more keenly. He was supported by the acclamations of no party, for in turn he resisted all. Even the great religious bodies who acknowledged him as their leader were frequently dissatisfied with a course which, while it adorned their principles, conceded nothing to their prejudices. The errors into which he may have fallen were in no single case debased by any selfish motive, and were ever on the side of peace and of the civil and religious liberties of mankind.

But those indications of human character which it chiefly concerns us to study, are not, after all, to be discovered in places where men act together in large masses, and under strong excitement. Mr. Wilberforce's interior life is exhibited in this biography with a minuteness of self-dissection which we think hardly possible to contemplate without some degree of pain. It was his habit to note, in the most careless and elliptical language, every passing occurrence, however trivial, apparently as a mere aid to recollection. But his journals also contain the results of a most unsparing self-examination, and record the devotional feelings with which his mind was habitually possessed. They bear that impress of perfect sincerity, without which they would have been altogether worthless. The suppression of them would have disappointed the expectations of a very large body of readers; and the sacred profession of the editors gives peculiar authority to their judgment as to the advantage of such disclosures. To their filial piety the whole work, indeed almost every line of it, bears conclusive testimony. We feel, however, an invincible repugnance to the transfer into these pages of the secret communings of a close self-observer with his Maker. The Church of Rome is wise in proclaiming the sanctity of the confessional. The morbid anatomy of the human heart (for such it must appear to every one who dares to explore its recesses) is at best a cheerless study. It would require some fortitude in any man to state how much of our mutual affection and esteem depends upon our imperfect knowledge of each other. The same creative wisdom which shelters from every human eye the workings of our animal frame, has not less closely shrouded from observation the movements of our spiritual nature. The lowly and contrite spirit is a shrine in which he who inhabiteth eternity condescends to dwell, but where we at least are accustomed to regard every other presence as profane. There is, we think, great danger in such publications. For one man who, like Mr. Wilberforce, will honestly lay bare his conscience on paper, there are at least one hundred, living with the fear or the hope of the biographer before their eyes, who will apply themselves to the same task in a very different spirit. The desire of posthumous, or of living fame, will dictate the acknowledgment of faults, which the reader is to regard as venial, while he is to admire the sagacity with which they are dictated, and the tenderness of conscience with which they are deplored. We may be wrong; but both experience and probability seem to us to show that the publication of the religious journals of one honest man, is likely to make innumerable hypocrites.

The domestic life of Mr. Wilberforce is a delightful object of contemplation, though it cannot be reduced into the form of distinct narration. From his twenty-sixth year his biography consists rather of a description of habits than of a succession of events. No man had less to do with adventure, or was more completely independent of any such resource. The leisure which he could withdraw from the service of the public was concentrated upon his large and happy household, and on the troops of friends who thronged the hospitable mansion in which he lived in the neighbourhood of London.

The following sketch of his domestic retirement possesses a truth which will be at once recognised by every one who was accustomed to associate with him in such scenes:

"Who that ever joined him in his hour of daily exercise, cannot see him now as he walked round his garden at Highwood, now in animated and even playful conversation, and then drawing from his copious pockets (to contain Dalrymple's State Papers was their standard measure) a Psalter, a Horace, a Shakspeare, or Cowper, and reading or reciting chosen passages, and then catching at long stored flower leaves as the wind blew them from the pages, or standing by a favourite gumcistus to repair the loss. Then he would point out the harmony of the tints, the beauty of the pencilling and the perfection of the colouring, and sum up all into those ascriptions of praise to the Almighty which were ever welling from his grateful heart. He loved flowers with all the simple delight of childhood. He would hover from bed to bed over his favourites, and when he came in, even from his shortest walk, he deposited a few that he had gathered safely in his room before he joined the breakfast table. Often he would say as he enjoyed their fragrance, 'How good is God to us. What should we think of a friend who had furnished us with a magnificent house and all we needed, and then coming in to see that all had been provided according to his wishes, should he be hurt to find that no scents had been placed in the rooms? Yet so has God dealt with us—lovely flowers are the smiles of his goodness.'"

The following letter to one of his children exhibits Mr. Wilberforce in one of those characters in which he excelled most men:

"Battersea Rise, Sept. 14, 1814.

"My very dear ——:

"I do not relish the idea that you are the only one of my children who has not written to me during my absence, and that you should be the only one to whom I should not write. I therefore take up my pen, though but for a few moments, to assure you that I do not suspect your silence to have arisen from the want of affection for me, any more than that which I myself have hitherto observed has proceeded from this source. There is a certain demon called procrastination, who inhabits a castle in the air at Sandgate, as well as at so many other places, and I suspect that you have been carried up some day (at the tail of your kite perhaps) and lodged in that same habitation, which has fine large rooms in it from which there are beautiful prospects in all directions; and probably you will not quit a dwelling-place that you like so well, till you hear that I am on my way to Sandgate. You will meet the to-morrow man there, (it just occurs to me,) and I hope you will have prevailed on him to tell you the remainder of that pleasant story, a part of which Miss Edgeworth has related, though I greatly fear he would still partake so far of the spirit of the place as to leave a part untold till —to-morrow. But I am trifling sadly, since I am this morning unusually pressed for time, I will therefore only guard my dear boy seriously against procrastination, one of the most dangerous assailants of usefulness, and assure him that I am to-day, to-morrow, and always while I exist, his affectionate father.

"W. Wilberforce."

Mr. Wilberforce excelled in the arts of hospitality, and delighted in the practice of them. His cordial welcome taught the most casual guest to feel that he was at home; and the mass of his friends and acquaintance could scarcely suppose that there was a domestic sanctuary still more sacred and privileged than that into which they were admitted. Amongst them are not a few obscure, with some illustrious names; and of the latter Mr. Pitt is by far the most conspicuous.

There is no one filling so large a space in recent history as Mr. Pitt, with whose private habits the world is so little acquainted. These volumes do not contribute much to dispel the obscurity. We find him indeed at one time passing an evening in classical studies or amusements with Mr. Canning; and at another, cutting walks through his plantations at Holwood, with the aid of Mr. Wilberforce and Lord Grenville. But on the whole, the William Pitt of this work is the austere minister with whom we were already acquainted, and not the man himself in his natural or in his emancipated state.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Wilberforce is almost the only passage which gives us an intimation of the careless familiarity in which for many years they lived together:

"And now after having transacted my business with the minister, a word or two to the man—a character in which, if it is more pleasant to you, it is no less pleasant to me to address you. I wish you may be passing your time half as salubriously and comfortably as I am at Gisborne's, where I am breathing good air, eating good mutton, keeping good hours, and enjoying the company of good friends. You have only two of the four at command, nor these always in so pure a state as in Needwood Forest; your town mutton being apt to be woolly, and your town friends to be interested: however, I sincerely believe you are, through the goodness of Providence, better off in the latter particular, than has been the fate of ninety-nine ministers out of a hundred; and as for the former, the quantity you lay in may in some degree atone for the quality; and it is a sign that neither in friends nor mutton you have yet lost your taste. Indeed, I shall reckon it a bad symptom of your moral or corporal state, as the case may be, when your palate is so vitiated, that you cannot distinguish the true from the false flavour. All this is sad stuff, but you must allow us gentlemen who live in forests to be a little figurative. I will only add, however, (that I may not quite exhaust your patience,) that I hope you will never cease to relish me, and do me the justice to believe the ingredients are good, though you may not altogether approve of the cooking. Yours ever,

"W. Wilberforce."

P. S. Remember me to all friends. I hope you have no more gout, &c. If you will at any time give me a line (though it be but a mouthful) I shall be glad of it. You will think me be-Burked like yourself."

On the occasion of Mr. Pitt's duel with Mr. Tierney, Mr. Wilberforce had designed to bring the subject under the notice of the House of Commons. The intention was defeated by the following kind and characteristic letter:

"My dear Wilberforce:

"I am not the person to argue with you on a subject in which I am a good deal concerned. I hope too that I am incapable of doubting your kindness to me (however mistaken I may think it,) if you let any sentiment of that sort actuate you on the present occasion. I must suppose that some such feeling has inadvertently operated upon you, because whatever may be your general sentiments on subjects of this nature, they can have acquired no new tone or additional argument from any thing that has passed in this transaction. You must be supposed to bring this forward in reference to the individual case.

"In doing so, you will be accessary in loadone of the parties with unfair and unmerited obloquy. With respect to the other party, myself, I feel it a real duty to say to you frankly that your motion is one for my removal. If any step on the subject is proposed in Parliament and agreed to, I shall feel from that moment that I can be of no more use out of office than in it; for in it according to the feelings I entertain, I could be of none. I state to you, as I think I ought, distinctly and explicitly what I feel. I hope I need not repeat what I always feel personally to yourself.— Your's ever, William Pitt."

"Downing Street, Wednesday, May 30, 1798, 11 P. M."

The following passage is worth transcribing as a graphic, though slight sketch of Mr. Pitt, from the pen of one who knew him so well:

"When a statement had been made to the house of the cruel practices approaching certainly to torture, by which the discovery of concealed arms had been enforced in Ireland, John Claudius Beresford rose to reply, and said with a force and honesty, the impression of which I never can forget, 'I fear, and feel deep shame in making the avowal—I fear it is too true—I defend it not—but I trust I may be permitted to refer, as some palliation of these atrocities, to the state of my unhappy country, where rebellion and its attendant horrors had roused on both sides to the highest pitch all the strongest passions of our nature.' I was with Pitt in the House of Lords when Lord Clare replied to a similar charge—'Well, suppose it were so; but surely,' &c. I shall never forget Pitt's look. He turned round to me with that indignant stare which sometimes marked his countenance, and stalked out of the house."

It is not generally known that at the period of Lord Melville's trial a coolness almost approaching to estrangement had arisen between that minister and Mr. Pitt. The following extract from one of Mr. Wilberforce's Diaries on this subject affords an authentic and curious illustration of Mr. Pitt's character:

"I had perceived above a year before that Lord Melville had not the power over Pitt's mind, which he once possessed. Pitt was *taking me to* Lord Camden's, and in our *tete-a-tete* he gave me an account of the negotiations which had been on foot to induce him to enter Addington's administration. When they quitted office in 1801, Dundas proposed taking as his motto, *Jam rude donatus*. Pitt suggested to him that having always been an active man, he would probably wish again to come into office, and then that his having taken such a motto would be made a ground for ridicule. Dundas assented, and took another motto. Addington had not long been in office, before Pitt's expectation was fulfilled, and Dundas undertook to bring Pitt into the plan; which was to appoint some third person head, and bring in Pitt and Addington on equal terms under him. Dundas, accordingly, confiding in his knowledge of all Pitt's ways and feelings, set out for Walmer Castle; and after dinner, and Port wine, began cautiously to open his proposals. But he saw it would not do, and stopped abruptly. 'Really,' said Pitt with a sly severity, and it was almost the only sharp thing I ever heard him say of any friend, 'I had not the curiosity to ask what I was to be.'"

Amongst the letters addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, to be found in these volumes, is one written by John Wesley from his death-bed, on the day before he sank into the lethargy from which he was never roused. They are probably the last written words of that extraordinary man.

"February 24, 1791.

"My dear Sir,

"Unless Divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villany which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; and if God be for you, who can be against you? Are all of them together stronger than God? Oh! be not weary of well-doing. Go on in the name of God, and in the power of his might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it. That He who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir, your affectionate servant,

"John Wesley."

From a very different correspondent, Jeremy Bentham, Mr. Wilberforce received two notes, for which, as they are the only examples we have seen in print of his epistolary style, we must find a place.

"Kind Sir,

"The next time you happen on Mr. Attorney-general in the house or elsewhere, be pleased to take a spike—the longer and sharper the better—and apply it to him by way of *memento*, that the Penitentiary Contract Bill has, for I know not what length of time, been sticking in his hands; and you will much oblige your humble servant to command.

"Jeremy Bentham."

"N. B. A corking-pin was, yesterday, applied by Mr. Abbot."

"I sympathize with your now happily promising exertions in behalf of the race of innocents, whose lot it has hitherto been to be made the subject-matter of depredation, for the purpose of being treated worse than the authors of such crimes are treated for those crimes in other places."

There are, in this work, some occasional additions to the stock of political anecdotes. Of these we transcribe the following specimens:

"Franklin signed the peace of Paris in his old spotted velvet coat (it being the time of a court-mourning, which rendered it more particular.) 'What,' said my friend the negotiator, 'is the meaning of that harlequin coat?' 'It is that in which he was abused by Wedderburne.' He showed much rancour and personal enmity to this country—would not grant the common passports for trade, which were, however, easily got from Jay or Adams.

"Dined with Lord Camden; he, very chatty and pleasant. Abused Thurlow for his duplicity and mystery. Said the king had said to him occasionally he had wished Thurlow and Pitt to agree; for that both were necessary to him—one in the Lords, the other in the Commons. Thurlow will never do any thing to oblige Lord Camden, because he is a friend of Pitt's. Lord Camden himself, though he speaks of Pitt with evident affection, seems rather to complain of his being too much under the influence of any one who is about him; particularly of Dundas, who prefers his countrymen whenever he can.—Lord Camden is sure that Lord Bute got money by the peace of Paris. He can account for his sinking near £300,000 in land and houses; and his paternal estate in the island which bears his name was not above £1500 a-year, and he is a life-tenant only of Wortley, which may be £8000 or £10,000. Lord Camden does not believe Lord Bute has any the least connexion with the king now, whatever he may have had. Lord Thurlow is giving constant dinners to the judges, to gain them over to his party, * * * * was applied to by * * * *, a wretched sort of dependant of the Prince of Wales, to know if he would lend him money on the joint bond of the prince and dukes of York and Clarence, to receive double the sum lent, whenever the king should die, and either the Prince of Wales, the dukes of York and Clarence, come into the inheritance. The sum intended to be raised is £200,000.

"'Tis only a hollow truce, not a peace, that is made between Thurlow and Pitt. They can have no confidence in each other."

It is perhaps the most impressive circumstance in Mr. Wilberforce's character, that the lively interest with which he engaged in all these political occurrences was combined with a consciousness not less habitual or intense of their inherent vanity. There is a seeming paradox in the solicitude with which he devoted so much of his life to secular pursuits, and the very light esteem in which he held them. The solution of the enigma is to be found in his unremitting habits of devotion. No man could more scrupulously obey the precept which Mr. Taylor has given to his "Statesman"—To observe a "Sabbatical day in every week, and a Sabbatical hour in every day." Those days and hours gave him back to the world, not merely with recruited energy, but in a frame of mind the most favourable to the right discharge of its duties. Things in themselves the most trivial, wearisome, or even offensive, had, in his solitude, assumed a solemn interest from their connexion with the future destinies of mankind, whilliant and alluring objects of human ambition had been brought into a humiliating contrast with the great ends for which life is given, and with the immortal hopes by which it should be sustained. Nothing can be more heartfelt than the delight with which he breathed the pure air of these devotional retirements. Nothing more soothing than the tranquillity which they diffused over a mind harassed with the vexations of a political life.

Mr. Wilberforce retired from Parliament in the year 1825. The remainder of his life was passed in the bosom of his family. He did not entirely escape those sorrows which so usually thicken as the shadows grow long, for he survived both his daughters; and, from that want of worldly wisdom which always characterized him, he lost a very considerable part of his fortune in speculations in which he had nothing but the gratification of parental kindness to gain or to hope. But never were such reverses more effectually baffled by the invulnerable peace of a cheerful and self-approving heart. There were not wanting external circumstances which marked the change; but the most close and intimate observer could never perceive on his countenance even a passing shade of dejection or anxiety on that account. He might, indeed, have been supposed to be unconscious that he had lost any thing, had not his altered fortunes occasionally suggested to him remarks on the Divine goodness, by which the seeming calamity had been converted into a blessing to his children and to himself. It afforded him a welcome apology for withdrawing from society at large, to gladden, by his almost constant presence, the homes of his sons by whom his life has been recorded. There, surrounded by his children and his grandchildren, he yielded himself to the current of each successive inclination; for he had now acquired that rare maturity of the moral stature in which the conflict between inclination and duty is over, and virtue and self-indulgence are the same. Some decline of his intellectual powers was perceptible to the friends of his earlier and more active days; but

"To things immortal time can do no wrong,
And that which never is to die, for ever must be young."

Looking back with gratitude, sometimes eloquent, but more often from the depth of the emotion faltering on the tongue, to his long career of usefulness, of honour, and enjoyment, he watched with grave serenity the ebb of the current which was fast bearing him to his eternal reward. He died in his seventy-fifth year, in undisturbed tranquillity, after a very brief illness, and without any indication of bodily suffering. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the presence of a large number of the members of both Houses of Parliament; nor was the solemn ritual of the church ever pronounced over the grave of any of her children with more affecting or more appropriate truth. Never was recited, on a more fit occasion, the sublime benediction—"I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Write, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

The volumes to which we have been chiefly indebted for this very rapid epitome of some of the events of Mr. Wilberforce's life, will have to undergo a severe ordeal. There are numberless persons who assert a kind of property in his reputation, and who will resent as almost a personal wrong any exhibition of his character which may fall short of their demands. We believe, however, though not esteeming ourselves the best possible judges, that even this powerful party will be satisfied. They will find in this portraiture of their great leader much to fulfil their expectations. Impartial judges will, we think, award to the book the praise of fidelity, and diligence, and unaffected modesty. Studiously withdrawing themselves from the notice of their readers, the biographers of Mr. Wilberforce have not sought occasion to display the fruits of their theological or literary studies. Their taste has been executed with ability, and with deep affection. No one can read such a narrative without interest, and many will peruse it with enthusiasm. It contains several extracts from Mr. Wilberforce's speeches and throws much occasional light on the political history of England during the last half century. It brings us into acquaintance with a circle in which were projected and matured many of the great schemes of benevolence by which our age has been distinguished, and shows how partial is the distribution of renown in the world in which we are living. A more equal dispensation of justice would have awarded a far more conspicuous place amongst the benefactors of mankind to the names of Mr. Stephen and Mr. Macaulay, than has ever yet been assigned to them.

Biography, considered as an art, has been destroyed by the greatest of all biographers, James Boswell. His success must be forgotten before Plutarch or Isaac Walton will find either rivals or imitators. Yet memoirs, into which every thing illustrative of the character or fortunes of the person to be described is drawn, can never take a permanent place in literature, unless the hero be himself as picturesque as Johnson, nor unless the writer be gifted with the dramatic powers of Boswell. Mr. Wilberforce was an admirable subject for graphic sketches in this style; but the hand of a son could not have drawn them without impropriety, and they have never been delineated by others. A tradition, already fading, alone preserves the memory of those social powers which worked as a spell on every one who approached him, and drew from Madame de Staël the declaration that he was the most eloquent and the wittiest converser she had met in England. But the memory of his influence in the councils of the state, of his holy character, and of his services to mankind, rests upon an imperishable basis, and will descend with honour to the latest times.

THE LIVES OF WHITFIELD AND FROUDE.*

[EDINBURGH REVIEW, 1838.]

If the enemies of Christianity in the commencement of the last century failed to accomplish its overthrow, they were at least successful in producing what at present appears to have been a strange and unreasonable panic. Middleton, Bolingbroke, and Mandeville, have now lost their terrors; and (in common with the heroes of the Dunciad) Chubb, Toland, Collins, and Woolston, are remembered only on account of the brilliancy of the *Auto-da-fe* at which they suffered. To these writers, however, belongs the credit of having suggested to Clarke his inquiries into the elementary truth on which all religion depends; and by them Warburton was provoked to "demonstrate" the Divine legation of Moses. They excited Newton to explore the fulfilment of prophecy, and Lardner to accumulate the proofs of the credibility of the Gospels. A greater than any of these, Joseph Butler, was induced, by the same adversaries, to investigate the analogy of natural and revealed religion, and Berkeley and Sherlock, with a long catalogue of more obscure names, crowded to the rescue of the menaced citadel of the faith. But in this anxiety to strengthen its defences, the garrison not only declined to attempt new conquests, but withdrew from much of their ancient dominion. In this its apologetic age, English theology was distinguished by an unwonted timidity and coldness. The alliance which it had maintained from the days of Jewel to those of Leighton, with philosophy and eloquence, with wit and poetry, was dissolved. Taylor and Hall, Donne and Hooker, Baxter and Howe, had spoken as men having authority, and with an unclouded faith in their divine mission. In that confidence they had grappled with every difficulty, and had wielded with equal energy and ease all the resources of genius and of learning. Alternately searching the depths of the heart, and playing over the mere surface of the mind, they relieved the subtleties of logic by a quibble or a pun, and illuminated, by intense flashes of wit, the metaphysical abysses which it was their delight to tread. Even when directing the spiritual affections to their highest exercise, they hazarded any quaint conceit which crossed their path, and yielded to every impulse of fancy or of passion. But divinity was no longer to retain the foremost place in English literature. The Tillotsons and Seckers of a later age were alike distrustful of their readers and of themselves. Tame, cautious, and correct, they rose above the Tatlers and Spectators of their times, because on such themes it was impossible to be frivolous; but they can be hardly said to have contributed as largely as Steele and Addison to guide the opinions, or to form the character of their generation.

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* *The Life and Times of the Rev. George Whitfield, M. A.* By ROBERT PHILIP. 8vo. London, 1838.

Remains of the Rev. Richard Hurrell Froude, M. A. Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.

This depression of theology was aided by the state of political parties under the two first princes of the house of Brunswick. Low and high church were but other names for whigs and tories; and while Hoadley and Atterbury wrangled about the principles of the revolution, the sacred subjects which formed the pretext of their disputes were desecrated in the feelings of the multitude, who witnessed and enjoyed the controversy. Secure from farther persecution, and deeply attached to the new order of things, the dissenters were no longer roused to religious zeal by invidious secular distinctions; and Doddington and Watts lamented the decline of their congregations from the standard of their ancient piety. The former victims of bigotry had become its proselytes, and anathemas were directed against the pope and the pretender, with still greater acrimony than against the evil one, with whom good protestants of all denominations associated them.

The theology of any age at once ascertains and regulates its moral stature; and, at the period of which we speak, the austere virtues of the Puritans, and the more meek and social, though not less devout spirit of the worthies of the Church of England, if still to be detected in the recesses of private life, were discountenanced by the general habits of society. The departure of the more pure and generous influences of earlier times may be traced no where more clearly than in those works of fiction, in which the prevailing profligacy of manners was illustrated by Fielding, Sterne, and Smollet; and proved, though with more honest purposes, by Richardson and Defoe.

It was at this period that the *Alma Mater* of Laud and Sacheverel was nourishing in her bosom a little band of pupils destined to accomplish a momentous revolution in the national character. Wesley had already attained the dawn of manhood when, in 1714, his future rival and coadjutor, George Whitfield, was born at a tavern in Gloucester, of which his father was the host. The death of the elder Whitfield within two years from that time, left the child to the care of his mother, who took upon herself the management of the "Bell Inn;" though as her son has gratefully recorded, she "prudently kept him, in his tender years, from intermeddling with the tavern business." In such a situation he almost inevitably fell into vices and follies, which have been exaggerated as much by the vehemence of his own confessions, as by the malignity of his enemies. They exhibit some curious indications of his future character. He robbed his mother, but part of the money was given to the poor. He stole books, but they were books of devotion. Irritated by the unlucky tricks of his play-fellows, who, he says, in the language of David, "compassed him about like bees," he converted into a prayer the prophetic imprecation of the Psalmist—"In the name of the Lord I will destroy them." The mind in which devotional feelings and bad passions were thus strongly knit together, was consigned in early youth, to the culture of the master of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt, in his native city; and there were given the first auspices of his future eminence. He studied the English dramatic writers, and represented their female characters with applause; and when the mayor and aldermen were to be harangued by one of the scholars, the embryo field-preacher was selected to extol the merits, and to gratify the tastes of their worships. His erratic propensities were developed almost as soon as his powers of elocution. Wearied with the studies of the grammar-school, he extorted his mother's reluctant consent to return to the tavern; and there, he says, "I put on my blue apron and my snuffers, washed mops, cleaned rooms, and, in one word, became professed and common drawer for nigh a year and a half." The tapster was, of course, occasionally tipsy, and always in request; but as even the flow of the tap may not be perennial, he found leisure to compose sermons, and stole from the night some hours for the study of the Bible.

At the Bell Inn there dwelt a sister-in-law of Whitfield's, with whom it was his fortune or his fault to quarrel; and to sooth his troubled spirit he "would retire and weep before the Lord, as Hagar when flying from Sarah." From the presence of this Sarah he accordingly fled to Bristol, and betook himself to the study of Thomas à Kempis; but returning once more to Gloucester, exchanged divinity for the drama, and then abandoned the dramatists for his long neglected school-books. For now had opened a prospect inviting him to the worthy use of those talents which might otherwise have been consumed in sordid occupations, or in some obscure and fruitless efforts to assert his native superiority to other men. Intelligence had reached his mother that admission might be obtained at Pembroke College, Oxford, for her capricious and thoughtful boy; and the intuitive wisdom of a mother's love assured her that through this avenue he might advance to distinction, if not to fortune. A few more oscillations between dissolute tastes and heavenward desires, and the youth finally gained the mastery over his lower appetites. From his seventeenth year to his dying day he lived amongst imbittered enemies and jealous friends, without a stain on his reputation.

In 1731 the gates of Pembroke College had finally closed on the rude figure of one of her illustrious sons, expelled by poverty to seek a precarious subsistence, and to earn a lasting reputation in the obscure alleys of London. In the following year they were opened to a pupil as ill provided with this world's wealth as Samuel Johnson, but destined to achieve a still more extensive and a more enduring celebrity. The waiter at the Bell Inn had become a servitor at Oxford—no great advancement in the social scale according to the habits of that age—yet a change which conferred the means of elevation on a mind too ardent to leave them unimproved. He became the associate of Charles, and the disciple of John Wesley, who had at that time taken as their spiritual guide the celebrated mystic, William Law. These future chiefs of a religious revolution were then "interrogating themselves whether they had been simple and recollected; whether they had prayed with fervour Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and on Saturday noon; if they had used a collect at nine, twelve, and three o'clock; duly meditated on Sunday from three to four on Thomas à Kempis, or mused on Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one on the Passion." But Quietism, indigenous in the East, is an exotic in this cold and busy land of ours, bearing at the best but sorry fruit, and hastening to a premature decay. Never was mortal man less fitted for the contemplative state than George Whitfield. It was an attempt as hopeless as that of converting a balloon into an observatory. He dressed the character indeed to admiration, for "he thought it unbecoming a penitent to have his hair powdered, and wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes." But the sublime abstractions which should people the cell and haunt the spirit of the hermit he wooed in vain. In the hopeless attempt to do nothing but meditate, "the power of meditating or even of thinking was," he says, "taken from him." Castanza on the "Spiritual Combat" advised him to talk but little; and "Satan said he must not talk at all." The Divine Redeemer had been surrounded in his temptations by deserts and wild beasts, and to approach this example as closely as the localities allowed, Whitfield was accustomed to select Christ Church meadow as the scene, and a stormy night as the time of his mental conflicts. He prostrated his body on the bare earth, fasted during Lent, and exposed himself to the cold till his hands began to blacken, and "by abstinence and inward struggles so emaciated his body as to be scarcely able to creep up stairs." In this deplorable state he received from the Wesleys books and ghostly counsels. His tutor, more wisely, sent him a physician, and for seven weeks he laboured under a severe illness. It was, in his own language, "a glorious visitation." It gave him time and composure to make a written record and a penitent confession of his youthful sins—to examine the New Testament; to read Bishop's Hall's Contemplations; and to seek by prayer for wisdom and for peace. The blessings thus invoked were not denied. "The day-star," he says, "arose in my heart. The spirit of mourning was taken from me. For some time I could not avoid singing Psalms wherever I was, but my joy became gradually more settled. Thus were the days of my mourning ended."

And thus also was ended his education.—Before the completion of his twenty-first year, Whitfield returned to Gloucester; and such was the fame of his piety and talents, that Dr. Benson, the then bishop of the diocess, offered to dispense, in his favour, with the rule which forbade the ordination of deacons at so unripe an age. The mental agitation which preceded his acceptance of this proposal, is described in these strange but graphic terms in one of his latest sermons.

"I never prayed against any corruption I had in my life so much as I did against going into holy orders so soon as my friends were for having me go. Bishop Benson was pleased to honour me with peculiar friendship, so as to offer me preferment, or to do any thing for me. My friends wanted me to mount the church betimes. They wanted me to knock my head against the pulpit too young, but how some young men stand up here and there and preach, I do not know. However it be to them, God knows how deep a concern entering into the ministry and preaching was to me. I have prayed a thousand times, till the sweat has dropped from my face like rain, that God of his infinite mercy would not let me enter into the church till he called me to and thrust me forth in his work. I remember once in Gloucester, I know the room; I look up to the window when I am there, and walk along the street. I know the window upon which I have laid prostrate. I said, Lord, I cannot go, I shall be puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Lord, do not let me go yet. I pleaded to be at Oxford two or three years more. I intended to make one hundred and fifty sermons, and thought that I would set up with a good stock in trade. I remember praying, wrestling, and striving with God. I said, I am undone. I am unfit to preach in thy great name. Send me not, Lord—send me not yet. I wrote to all my friends in town and country to pray against the bishop's solicitation, but they insisted I should go into orders before I was twenty-two. After all their solicitations, these words came into my mind, 'Nothing shall pluck you out of my hands;' they came warm to my heart. Then, and not till then, I said, 'Lord, I *will* go; send me when thou wilt.' He was ordained accordingly; and 'when the bishop laid his hands upon my head, my heart,' he says, 'was melted down, and I offered up my whole spirit, soul, and body.'"

A man within whose bosom resides an oracle directing his steps in the language and with the authority of inspiration, had needs be thus self-devoted in soul and body to some honest purpose, if he would not mistake the voice of the Pythoness for that which issues from the sanctuary. But the uprightness and inflexible constancy of Whitfield's character rendered even its superstitions comparatively harmless; and the sortilege was ever in favour of some new effort to accomplish the single object for which he henceforward lived. The next words which "came to his soul with power" were "Speak out, Paul," and never was injunction more strictly obeyed.

"Immediately," he says, "my heart was enlarged, and I preached on the Sunday morning to a very crowded audience with as much freedom as if I had been a preacher for some years. As I proceeded I perceived the fire kindled, till at last, though so young, and amidst a crowd of those who knew me in my infant childish days, I trust I was enabled to speak with some degree of gospel authority. Some few mocked, but most for the present seemed struck, and I have heard since that a complaint had been made to the bishop that I drove fifteen mad by my first sermon. The worthy prelate, as I am informed, wished that the madness might not be forgotten before next Sunday."

Thus early apprized of the secret of his strength, his profound aspirations for the growth of Christianity, the delight of exercising his rare powers, and the popular admiration which rewarded them, operating with combined and ceaseless force on a mind impatient of repose, urged him into exertions, which, if not attested by irrefragable proofs, might appear incredible and fabulous. It was the statement of one who knew him well, and who was incapable of wilful exaggeration—and it is confirmed by his letters, journals, and a whole cloud of witnesses—that "in the compass of a single week, and that for years, he spoke in general forty hours, and in very many sixty, and that to thousands; and after his labours, instead of taking any rest, he was engaged in offering up prayers and intercessions, with hymns and spiritual songs, as his manner was, in every house to which he was invited."

Given, a preacher, who during the passage of the sun though the ecliptic, addresses his audience every seventh day, in two discourses of the dwarfish size to which sermons attain in this degenerate age, and multiply his efforts by forty, and you do not reach the standard by which, for thirty-five successive years, Whitfield regulated this single branch of his exertions. Combine this with the fervour with which he habitually spoke, the want of all aids to the voice in the fields and the thoroughfares he frequented, and the toil of becoming distinctly audible to thousands and tens of thousands; and, considered merely as a physical phenomenon, the result is amongst the most curious of all well authenticated marvels. If the time spent in travelling from place to place, and some brief intervals of repose be subtracted, his whole life may be said to have been consumed in the delivery of one continuous or scarcely uninterrupted sermon. Strange as is such an example of bodily and mental energy, still stranger is the power he possessed of fascinating the attention of hearers of every rank of life and of every variety of understanding. Not only were the loom, the forge, the plough, the collieries, and the workshops, deserted at his approach, but the spell was acknowledged by Hume and Franklin—by Pulteney, Bolingbroke, and Chesterfield—by maids of honour and lords of the bed-chamber. Such indeed was its force, that when the scandal could be concealed behind a well adjusted curtain, "e'en mitred 'auditors' would nod the head." Neither English reserve, nor the theological discrimination of the Scotch, nor the callous nerves of the slave-dealers of America, nor the stately self-possession of her aborigines, could resist the enchantment. Never was mortal man gifted with such an incapacity of fatiguing or of being fatigued.

No similar praise could be honestly awarded to Whitfield's present biographer. He has followed the steps of the great itinerant from the cradle to the grave, in a volume of nearly six hundred closely printed pages, compiled on the principle that nothing can be 'superfluous in the narrative of a man's life which was of any real importance to the man himself, or to his associates. The chronicle so drawn up, illuminated by no gleams of philosophy, human or divine, and arranged on no intelligible method, is a sore exercise for the memory and the patience of the reader. It records, without selection or forbearance, thirteen successive voyages across the Atlantic—pilgrimages incalculable to every part of this island, and of the North American continent, from Georgia to Boston—controversies with Wesley on predestination and perfection, and with the bishops on still deeper mysteries—chapel buildings and subscriptions—preachings and the excitement which followed them—and characteristic sayings and uncharacteristic letters, meetings and partings, and every other incident, great and small, which has been preserved by the oral or written traditions of Whitfield's followers. His life still remains to be written by some one who shall bring to the task other qualifications than an honest zeal for his fame, and a cordial adoption of his opinions.

From the conflict with the enemies who had threatened her existence, the church militant turned to resist the unwelcome ally who now menaced her repose. Warburton led the van, and behind him many a mitred front scowled on the audacious innovator. Divested of the logomachies which chiefly engaged the attention of the disputants, the controversy between Whitfield and the bishops lay in a narrow compass. It being mutually conceded that the virtues of the Christian life can result only from certain divine impulses, and that to lay a claim to this holy inspiration when its legitimate fruits are wanting, is a fatal delusion; he maintained, and they denied, that the person who is the subject of this sacred influence has within his own bosom an independent attestation of its reality. So abstruse a debate required the zest of some more pungent ingredients; and the polemics with whom Whitfield had to do, were not such sciolists in their calling as to be ignorant of the necessity of riveting upon him some epithet at once opprobrious and vague. While, therefore, milder spirits arraigned him as an enthusiast, Warburton, with constitutional energy of invective, denounced him as a fanatic. In vain he demanded a definition of these reproachful terms. To have fixed their meaning would have been to blunt their edge. They afforded a solution at once compendious, obscure, and repulsive, of whatever was remarkable in his character, and have accompanied his name from that time to the present.

The currents of life had drifted Warburton on divinity as his profession, but nature designed him for a satirist; and the propensity was too strong to yield even to the study of the gospel. From them he might have discovered the injustice of his censure; for the real nature of religious fanaticism can be learnt with equal clearness from no other source. They tell of men who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, that when made they might train him up as a persecutor and a bigot; of others, who erected sepulchral monuments to the martyrs of a former age, while unsheathing the sword which was to augment their number; of some who would have called down fire from heaven to punish the inhospitable city which rejected their master; and of those who exhausted their bodies with fasting, and their minds with study, that they might with deeper emphasis curse the ignorant multitude. They all laboured under a mental disease, which, amongst fanatics of every generation, has assumed the same distinctive type. It consists in an unhallowed alliance of the morose and vindictive passions with devotion or religious excitement. Averting the mental vision from what is cheerful, affectionate, and animating in piety, the victims of this malady regard opposing sects, not as the children, but as the enemies of God; and while looking inward with melancholy alternations of pride and self-reproach, learn to contemplate Deity itself with but half-suppressed aversion. To connect the name of the kind hearted George Whitfield with such a reproach as this! To call on the indolent of all future generations who should believe in Warburton, to associate the despised itinerant with the Dominics, De Rances, and Bonners of former ages! Truly the indignant prelate knew not what manner of spirit he was of. If ever philanthropy burned in the human heart with a pure and intense flame, embracing the whole family of man in the spirit of universal charity, that praise is pre-eminently due to Whitfield. His predestinarian speculations perplexed his mind, but could not check the expansion of his Catholic feelings. "He loved the world that hated him." He had no preferences but in favour of the ignorant, the miserable, and the poor. In their cause he shrunk from no privation, and declined neither insult nor hostility. To such wrongs he opposed the weapons of an all-enduring meekness, and a love incapable of repulse. The springs of his benevolence were inexhaustible, and could not choose but flow. Assisted it may have been by natural disposition, and by many an external impulse; but it ultimately reposed on the fixed persuasion that he was engaged in a sacred duty, the faithful discharge of which would be followed by an imperishable recompense. With whatever undigested subtleties his religious creed was encumbered, they could not hide from him, though they might obscure the truth, that, between the virtues of this life and the rewards of a future state, the connexion is necessary and indissoluble. Referring this retributive dispensation exclusively to the divine benevolence, his theology inculcated humility while it inspired hope. It taught him self-distrust, and reliance on a strength superior to his own; and instructed him in the mystery which reconciles the elevation and the purity of disinterested love with those lower motives of action which more immediately respect the future advantage of the agent. Whatever else Whitfield may have been, a fanatic, in the proper sense of that term, he assuredly was not.

The charge of enthusiasm was so ambiguous, that it might, with equal propriety, be understood as conveying either commendation or reproach. Hope is the element in which all the great men of the world move and have their being. Engaged in arduous and lofty designs, they must, to a certain extent, live in an imaginary world, and recruit their exhausted strength with ideal prospects of the success which is to repay their labours. But, like every other emotion when long indulged, hope yields but a precarious obedience to the reasoning powers; and reason herself, even when most enlightened, will not seldom make a voluntary abdication of her sovereignty in favour of her powerful minister;—surrendering up to the guidance of impulse a mind whose aims are too high to be fulfilled under her own sober counsels. For in "this little state of man" the passions must be the free subjects, not the slaves of the understanding; and while they obey her precepts, should impart to her some of their own spirit, warmth, and energy. It is however, essential to a well constituted nature, that the subordination of the lower to the superior faculties, though occasionally relaxed, should be habitually maintained. Used with due abstinence, hope acts as a healthful tonic; intemperately indulged, as an enervating opiate. The visions of future triumph, which at first animated exertion, if dwelt upon too intently, will usurp the place of the stern reality, and noble objects will be contemplated, not for their own inherent worth, but on account of the day dreams they engender. Thus, imagination makes one man a hero, another a somnambulist, and a third a lunatic: while it renders them all enthusiasts. And thus are classed together, under one generic term, characters wide asunder as the poles, and standing at the top and at the bottom of the scale of human intellect; and the same epithet is used to describe Francis Bacon and Emanuel Swedenborg.

Religious men are, for obvious reasons, more subject than others to enthusiasm, both in its invigorating and in its morbid forms. They are aware that there is about their path and about their bed a real presence, which yet no sense attests. They revere a spiritual inmate of the soul, of whom they have no definite conciousness. They live in communion with one, whose nature is chiefly defined by negatives. They are engaged in duties which can be performed acceptably only at the bidding of the deepest affections. They rest their faith on prophetic and miraculous suspensions, in times past, of the usual course of nature; and derive their hopes and fears from the dim shadows cast by things eternal on the troubled mirror of this transient scene. What wonder if, under the incumbent weight of such thoughts as these, the course of active virtue be too often arrested; or if a religious romance sometimes takes the place of contemplative piety, and the fictitious gradually supersedes the real; and a world of dreams, a system of opinions, and a code of morals, which religion disavows, occasionally shed their narcotic influence over a spirit excited and oppressed by the shapeless forms and the fearful powers with which it is conversant?

Both in the more and in the less favourable sense of the expression, Whitfield was an enthusiast. The thraldom of the active to the meditative powers was indeed abhorrent from his nature; but he was unable to maintain a just equilibrium between them. His life was one protracted calenture; and the mental fever discoloured and distorted the objects of his pursuits. Without intellectual discipline or sound learning, he confounded his narrow range of elementary topics with the comprehensive scheme and science of divinity. Leaping over the state of pupilage, he became at once a teacher and a dogmatist. The lessons which he never drew from books, were never taught him by men. He allowed himself no leisure for social intercourse with his superiors, or with his equals; but underwent the debilitating effects of conversing almost exclusively with those who sat as disciples at his feet. Their homage, and the impetuous tumult of his career, left him but superficially acquainted with himself. Unsuspicious of his own ignorance, and exposed to flattery far more intoxicating than the acclamations of the theatre, he laid the foundations of a new religious system with less of profound thought, and in a greater penury of theological research, than had ever fallen to the lot of a reformer or heresiarch before. The want of learning was concealed under the dazzling veil of popular eloquence, and supplied by the assurance of divine illumination; and the spiritual influence on which he thus relied was little else than a continually recurring miracle. It was not a power like that which acts throughout the material world—the unseen and inaudible source of life, sustaining, cementing, and invigorating all things, hiding itself from the heedless beneath the subordinate agency it employs, and disclosed to the thoughtful by his prolific and plastic energies. The access of the Sacred presence, which Whitfield acknowledged, was perceptible by an inward consciousness, and was not merely different, but distinguishable from the movements of that intellectual and sensitive mechanism of his own nature, by means of which it operated. He discerned it not only in the growth of the active and passive virtues and in progressive strength and wisdom and peace, but in sudden impulses which visited his bosom, and unexpected suggestions which directed his path. A truth of all others the most consolatory and the most awful, was thus degraded almost to a level with superstitions, which, in their naked form, no man would have more vehemently disclaimed; and the great mystery which blends together the human and the divine in the Christian dispensation, lost much of its sublime character, and with it much of its salutary influence.

It was indeed impossible that a mind feeding upon such visions as he invited and cherished should entirely escape their practical mischief. He would have rejected with horror the impious dream that the indwelling Deity would absolve him from any obligation of justice, mercy, or truth. Yet he could persuade himself that he enjoyed a dispensation from the duty of canonical obedience to his ecclesiastical superiors. His revolt against the authority of the church of which he was a presbyter is at once avowed and defended by his present biographer. "If," he says, "a bishop did good or allowed good to be done, Whitfield venerated him and his office too; but he despised both whenever they were hostile to truth or zeal—I have no objection to say, whenever they were hostile to his own sentiments and measures. What honest man would respect an unjust judge, or an ignorant physician, because of their professional titles? It is high time to put an end to this nonsense."

Mr. Philip's boast is not, or at least should not be, that he is well found in the principles of casuistry. He is no *Ductor Dubitantium*, but a spiritual pugilist, who uses his pen as a cudgel. But, whatever may be the value of hard words, they are not sufficient to adjust such a question as this. Under sanctions of the most awful solemnity, Whitfield had bound himself to submit to the lawful commands of his bishop. His "measures," being opposed to the law ecclesiastical, were interdicted by his diocesan; but, his "sentiments" telling him that he was right, and the bishop wrong, the vow of obedience was, it seems, cancelled. If so, it was but an impious mockery to make or to receive it. If it be really "nonsense" to respect so sacred an engagement, then is there less sense than has usually been supposed in good faith and plain dealing. Even on the hazardous assumption that the allegiance voluntarily assumed by the clergy of the Anglican church is dissoluble at the pleasure of the inferior party, it is at least evident that, as an honest man, Whitfield was bound to abandon the advantages when he repudiated the duties of the relation in which he stood to his bishop. But, "despising" the episcopal office, he still kept his station in the episcopal church; and, if he had no share in her emoluments, continued at least to enjoy the rank, the worship, and the influence which attend her ministers. In the midst of his revolt he performed her offices, and ministered in her temples, as often as opportunity offered. It was the dishonest proceeding of a good man bewildered by dreams of the special guidance of a Divine Monitor. The apology is the error of an honest man led astray by a sectarian spirit.

The sinister influence of Whitfield's imagination on his opinions, and through them on his conduct, may be illustrated by another example. He not only became the purchaser of slaves, but condemned the restriction which at that time forbade their introduction into Georgia. There is extant, in his handwriting, an inventory of the effects at the Orphan House, in that province, in which these miserable captives take their place between the cattle and the carts. "Blessed be God," he exclaimed, "for the increase of the negroes. I entirely approve of reducing the Orphan House as low as possible, and I am determined to take no more than the plantation will maintain till I can buy more negroes." It is true that it was only as founder of this asylum for destitute children that he made these purchases; and true, that in these wretched bondsmen he recognised immortal beings for whose eternal welfare he laboured; and it is also true that the morality of his age was lax on the subject. But the American Quakers were already bearing testimony against the guilt of slavery and the slave trade; and even had they been silent, so eminent a teacher of Christianity as Whitfield, could not, without censure, have so far descended from Scriptural to conventional virtue.

To measure such a man as George Whitfield by the standards of refined society might seem a very strange, if not a ludicrous attempt. Yet, as Mr. Philip repeatedly, and with emphasis, ascribes to him the character of a "gentleman," it must be stated that he was guilty of high crimes and misdemeanours against the laws of that aristocratic commonwealth in which the assertion of social equality, and the nice observance of the privileges of sex and rank, are so curiously harmonized. Such was his want of animal courage, that in the vigour of his days he could tamely acquiesce in a severe personal chastisement, and fly to the hold of his vessel for safety at the prospect of an approaching sea-fight. Such was his failure in self-respect, that a tone of awkward adulation distinguishes his letters to the ladies of high degree who partook and graced his triumph. But his capital offence against the code of manners was the absence of that pudicity which shrinks from exposing to public gaze the deepest emotions of the heart. In journals originally divulged, and at last published by himself, and throughout his voluminous correspondence, he is "naked and is not ashamed." Some very coarse elements must have entered into the composition of a man who could thus scatter abroad disclosures of the secret communings of his spirit with his Maker.

Akin to this fault is his seeming unconsciousness of the oppressive majesty of the topics with which he was habitually occupied. The seraph in the prophetic vision was arrayed with wings, of which some were given to urge his flight, and others to cover his face. Vigorous as were the pinions with which Whitfield moved, he appears to have been unprovided with those beneath which his eyes should have shrunk from too familiar a contemplation of the ineffable glory. Where prophets and apostles "stood trembling," he is at his ease; where they adored, he declaims. This is, indeed, one of the besetting sins of licentiates in divinity. But few ever moved among the infinitudes and eternities of invisible things with less embarrassment or with less of silent awe. Illustrations might be drawn from every part of his writings, but hardly without committing the irreverence we condemn.

To the lighter graces of taste and fancy Whitfield had no pretension. He wandered from shore to shore unobservant of the wonders of art and nature, and the strange varieties of men and manners which solicited his notice. In sermons in which no resource within its reach is neglected, there is scarcely a trace to be found of such objects having met his eye or arrested his attention. The poetry of the inspired volume awakens in him no corresponding raptures; and the rhythmical quotations which overspread his letters never rise above the *cantilena* of the tabernacle. In polite literature, in physical and moral science, he never advanced much beyond the standard of the grammar-school of St. Mary de Crypt. Even as a theologian, he has no claims to erudition. He appears to have had no Hebrew and little Greek, and to have studied neither ecclesiastical antiquity nor the great divines of modern times. His reading seems to have been confined to a few, and those not the most considerable, of the works of the later nonconformists. Neither is it possible to assign him a place among profound or original thinkers. He was, in fact, almost an uneducated man; and the powers of his mind were never applied, and perhaps could not have been bent successfully, either to the acquisition of abstruse knowledge or to the enlargement of its boundaries. "Let the name of George Whitfield perish if God be glorified," was his own ardent and sincere exclamation. His disciples will hardly acquiesce in their teacher's self-abasement, but will resent, as injurious to him and to their cause, the imputations of enthusiasm, of personal timidity, of irreverence and coarseness of mind, of ignorance and of a mediocrity or absence of the powers of fancy, invention and research. But the apotheosis of saints is no less idolatrous than that of heroes; and they have not imbibed Whitfield's spirit who cannot brook to be told that he had his share of the faults and infirmities which no man more solemnly ascribed to the whole human race.

Such, however, was his energy and self-devotion, that even the defects of his character were rendered subservient to the one end for which he lived. From the days of Paul of Tarsus and Martin Luther to our own, history records the career of no man who, with a less alloy of motives terminating in self, or of passions breaking loose from the control of reason, concentrated all the faculties of his soul with such intensity and perseverance for the accomplishment of one great design. He belonged to that rare variety of the human species of which it has been said that the liberties of mankind depend on their inability to combine in erecting a universal monarchy. With nerves incapable of fatigue, and a buoyant confidence in himself, which no authority, neglect, or opposition could abate, opposing a *pachydermatous* front to all the missiles of scorn and contumely, and yet exquisitely sensitive to the affection which cheered, and the applause which rewarded his labours, unembarrassed by the learning which reveals difficulties, or the meditative powers which suggest doubts; with an insatiable thirst for active occupation, and an unhesitating faith in whatever cause he undertook; he might have been one of the most dangerous enemies of the peace and happiness of the world, if powers so formidable in their possible abuse had not been directed to a beneficent end. Judged by the wisdom which is of the earth, earthy, Whitfield would be pronounced a man whose energy ministered to a vulgar ambition, of which the triumph over his ecclesiastical superiors, and the admiration of unlettered multitudes, were the object and the recompense. Estimated by those whose religious opinions and observances are derived from him by hereditary descent, he is nothing less than an apostle, inspired in the latter ages of the church to purify her faith and to reform her morals. A more impartial survey of his life and writings may suggest the conclusion, that the homage of admiring crowds, and the blandishments of courtly dames, were neither unwelcome nor unsolicited; that a hierarchy subdued to inaction, if not to silence, gratified his self-esteem: and that, when standing on what he delighted to call his "throne," the current of devout and holy thoughts was not uncontaminated by the admixture of some human exultation. But ill betide him who delights in the too curious dissection of the motives of others, or even of his own. Such anatomists breathe an impure air, and unconsciously contract a sickly mental habit. Whitfield was a great and a holy man; among the foremost of the heroes of philanthropy, and as a preacher without a superior or a rival.

If eloquence be justly defined by the emotions it excites, or by the activity it quickens, the greatest orator of our times was he who first announced the victory of Waterloo—if that station be not rather due to the learned President of the College of Physicians, who daily makes the ears to tingle of those who listen to his prognostics. But the converse of the rule may be more readily admitted, and we may confidently exclude from the list of eloquent speakers him whose audience is impassive whilst he addresses them, and inactive afterwards. Every seventh day a great company of preachers raise their voices in the land to detect our sins, to explain our duty, to admonish, to alarm, and to console. Compare the prodigious extent of this apparatus with its perceptible results, and, inestimable as they are, who will deny that they disappointed the hopes which antecedently to experience, the least sanguine would have indulged? The preacher has, indeed, no novelties to communicate. His path has been trodden hard and dry by constant use; yet he speaks as an ambassador from Heaven, and his hearers are frail, sorrowing, perplexed, and dying men. The highest interests of both are at stake. The preacher's eye rests on his manuscript; the hearer's turns to the clock; the half hour glass runs out its sand; and the portals close on well-dressed groups of critics, looking for all the world as if just dismissed from a lecture on the tertiary strata.

Taking his stand on some rising knoll, his tall and graceful figure dressed with elaborate propriety, and composed into an easy and commanding attitude, Whitfield's clear blue eye ranged over thousands, and tens of thousands, drawn up in close files on the plain below, or clustering into masses on every adjacent eminence. A "rabble rout" hung on the skirts of the mighty host; and the feelings of the devout were disturbed by the scurrile jests of the illiterate and the old sarcasms of the more polished spectators of their worship. But the rich and varied tones of a voice of unequalled depth and compass quickly silenced every ruder sound—as in rapid succession its ever-changing melodies passed from the calm of simple narrative, to the measured distinctness of argument, to the vehemence of reproof, and the pathos of heavenly consolation. "Sometimes the preacher wept exceedingly, stamped loudly and passionately, and was frequently so overcome that for a few seconds one would suspect he could never recover, and, when he did, nature required some little time to compose herself." In words originally applied to one of the first German Reformers—*vividus vultus, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, denique omnia vivida.* The agitated assembly caught the passions of the speaker, and exulted, wept, or trembled at his bidding. He stood before them, in popular belief, a persecuted man, spurned and rejected by lordly prelates, yet still a presbyter of the church, and clothed with her authority; his meek and lowly demeanour chastened and elevated by the conscious grandeur of the apostolic succession. The thoughtful gazed earnestly on the scene of solemn interest, pregnant with some strange and enduring influence on the future condition of mankind. But the wise and the simple alike yielded to the enchantment; and the thronging multitude gave utterance to their emotions in every form in which nature seeks relief from feeling too strong for mastery.

Whitfield had cultivated the histrionic art to a perfection which has rarely been obtained by any who have worn the sock or the buskin. Foote and Garrick were his frequent hearers, and brought away with them the characteristic and very just remark, that "his oratory was not at its full height until he had repeated a discourse forty times." The transient delirium of Franklin—attested by the surrender on one occasion of all the contents of his purse at a "charity sermon," and by the Quaker's refusal to lend more to a man who had lost his wits—did not prevent his investigating the causes of this unwonted excitement. "I came," he says, "by hearing him often, to distinguish between sermons newly composed and those he had preached often in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition, that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of the voice was so perfectly timed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse—a pleasure of much the same kind as that received from an excellent piece of music."

The basis of the singular dominion which was thus exercised by Whitfield during a period equal to that assigned by ordinary calculation for the continuance of human life, would repay a more careful investigation than we have space or leisure to attempt. Amongst subordinate influences, the faintest of all is that which may have been occasionally exercised over the more refined and sensitive members of his congregations by the romantic scenery in which they assembled. But the tears shaping "white gutters down the black faces of the colliers, black as they came out of the coal pits," were certainly not shed under any overwhelming sense of the picturesque. The preacher himself appears to have felt and courted this excitement. "The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening, was," he says, "almost too much for me." But a far more effectual resource was found in the art of diverting into a new and unexpected channel, the feelings of a multitude already brought together with objects the most strangely contrasted to his own. Journeying to Wales, he passes over Hampton Common, and finds himself surrounded by twelve thousand people collected to see a man hung in chains, and an extempore pulpit is immediately provided within sight of this deplorable object. On another similar occasion, the wretched culprit was permitted to steal an hour from the eternity before him, while listening, or seeming to listen, to a sermon delivered by Whitfield to himself and to the spectators of his approaching doom. He reaches Basingstroke, when the inhabitants are engaged in all the festivities of a country fair, and thus records the use he made of so tempting an opportunity. "As I passed on horseback I saw the stage, and as I rode further I met divers coming to the revel, which affected me so much that I had no rest in my spirit, and therefore having asked counsel of God, and perceiving an unusual warmth and power enter into my soul, though I was gone above a mile, I could not bear to see so many dear souls for whom Christ had died ready to perish, and no minister or magistrate to interpose; upon this, I told my dear fellow-travellers that I was resolved to follow the example of Howell Harris in Wales, and bear my testimony against such lying vanities, let the consequences to my own private person be what they would. They immediately assenting, I rode back to the town, got upon the stage erected for the wrestlers, and began to show them the error of their ways."

The often told tale of Whitfield's controversy with the merry-andrew at Moorfields, still more curiously illustrates the skill and intrepidity with which he contrived to divert to his own purposes an excitement running at high tide in the opposite direction. The following is an extract from his own narrative of the encounter.

"For many years, from one end of Moorfields to the other, booths of all kinds have been erected for mountebanks, players, puppet-shows, and such like. With a heart bleeding with compassion for so many thousands led captive by the devil at his will, on Whit-Monday, at six o'clock in the morning, attended by a large congregation of praying people, I ventured to lift up a standard amongst them, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Perhaps there were about ten thousand in waiting, not for me, but for Satan's instruments to amuse them. Glad was I to find that I had for once, as it were, got the start of the devil. I mounted my field pulpit; almost all flocked immediately around it; I preached on these words—'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' &c. They gazed, they listened, they wept, and I believe that many felt themselves stung with deep conviction for their past sins. All was hushed and solemn. Being thus encouraged I ventured out again at noon. The whole fields seemed, in a bad sense of the word, all white, ready not for the Redeemer's but for Beelzebub's harvest. All his agents were in full motion. Drummers, trumpeters, merry-andrews, masters of puppet-shows, exhibitions of wild beasts, players, &c., all busy in entertaining their respective auditors. I suppose there could not be less than twenty or thirty thousand people. My pulpit was fixed on the opposite side, and immediately, to their great mortification, they found the number of their attendants sadly lessened. Judging that, like St. Paul, I should now be called, as it were, to fight with beasts at Ephesus, I preached from these words, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' You may easily guess that there was some noise among the craftsmen, and that I was honoured with having a few stones, dirt, rotten eggs, and pieces of dead cats thrown at me, whilst engaged in calling them from their favourite but lying vanities. My soul was indeed among lions, but far the greatest part of my congregation, which was very large, seemed for awhile turned into lambs. This Satan could not brook. One of his choicest servants was exhibiting, trumpeting on a large stage, but as soon as the people saw me in my black robes and my pulpit, I think all to a man left him and ran to me. For awhile I was enabled to lift my voice like a trumpet, and many heard the joyful sound. God's people kept praying, and the enemy's agents made a kind of roaring at some distance from our camp. At length they approached near, and the merry-andrew got up on a man's shoulders, and, advancing near the pulpit, attempted to lash me with a long heavy whip several times, but always with the violence of his motion tumbled down. I think I continued in praying, preaching and singing (for the noise was too great to preach) for about three hours. We then retired to the tabernacle, with my pockets full of notes from persons brought under concern, and read them amidst the praises and spiritual acclamations of thousands. Three hundred and fifty awakened souls were received in one day, and I believe the number of notes exceeded a thousand."

The propensity to mirth, which, in common with all men of robust mental constitution, Whitfield possessed in an unusual degree.

was, like every thing else belonging to him, compelled to minister to the interests and success of his preaching; but however much his pleasantries may attest the buoyancy of his mind, it would be difficult to assign them any other praise. Oscillating in spirit as well as in body, between Drury-Lane and the tabernacle, Shuter, the comedian, attended in Tottenham Court Road during the run of his successful performance of the character of Ramble, and was greeted with the following apostrophe—"And thou, poor Ramble, who hast so long rambled from Him, come thou also. Oh! end thy ramblings, and come to Jesus." The preacher in this instance descended not a little below the level of the player.

In the eighteenth century the crown of martyrdom was a prize for which Roman Catholics alone were permitted to contend, and Whitfield was unable to gain the influence which he would have derived from the stake, from a prison or a confiscation. Conscious, however, of the importance of such sufferings, he persuaded himself and desired to convince the world, that he had to endure them. The bishops were persecutors, because they repelled with some acrimony his attacks on their authority and reputation. The mob were persecutors, because they pelted a man who insisted on their hearing him preach when they wanted to see a bear dance, or a conjurer eat fire. A magistrate was a persecutor, because he summoned him to appear on an unfounded charge, and then dismissed him on his own recognisance. He gloried with better reason in the contemptuous language with which he was assailed, even by the more decorous of his opponents, and in the ribaldries of Foot and Bickerstaff. He would gladly have partaken of the doom of Rogers and Ridley, if his times had permitted, and his cause required it; but the fires of Smithfield were put out, and the exasperated Momus of the fair, with his long whip, alone remained to do the honours appropriated to the feast of St. Bartholomew.

There are extant seventy-five of the sermons by which Whitfield agitated nations, and the more remote influence of which is still distinctly to be traced, in the popular divinity and the national character of Great Britain and of the United States. They have, however, fallen into neglect; for to win permanent acceptance for a book, into which the principles of life were not infused by its author, is a miracle which not even the zeal of religious proselytes can accomplish. Yet, inferior as were his inventive to his mimetic powers, Whitfield is entitled, among theological writers, to a place, which if it cannot challenge admiration, may at least excite and reward curiosity. Many, and those by far the worst, of his discourses, bear the marks of careful preparation. Take at hazard a sermon of one of the preachers usually distinguished as evangelical, add a little to its length, and subtract a great deal from its point and polish, and you have one of his more elaborate performances—common topics discussed in a common-place way; a respectable mediocrity of thought and style; endless variations on one or two cardinal truths—in short, the task of a clerical Saturday evening, executed with piety, good sense and exceeding sedateness. But open one of that series of Whitfield's sermons which bears the stamp of having been conceived and uttered at the same moment, and imagine it recited to myriads of eager listeners with every charm of voice and gesture, and the secret of his unrivalled fascination is at least partially disclosed. He places himself on terms of intimacy and unreserved confidence with you, and makes it almost as difficult to decline the invitation to his familiar talk as if Montagne himself had issued it. The egotism is amusing, affectionate and warm-hearted; with just that slight infusion of self-importance without which it would pass for affectation. In his art of rhetoric, personification holds the first place; and the *prosopopæia* is so managed as to quicken abstractions into life, and to give them individuality and distinctness without the exhibition of any of those spasmodic and distorted images which obey the incantations of vulgar exorcists. Every trace of study and contrivance is obliterated by the hearty earnestness which pervades each successive period, and by the vernacular and homely odioms in which his meaning is conveyed. The recollection of William Cobbett will obtrude itself on the reader of these discourses, though the presence of the sturdy athlete of the "Political Register," with his sophistry and his sarcasm, his drollery and his irascible vigour, sorely disturbs the sacred emotions which it was the one object of the preacher to awaken. And it is in this grandeur and singleness of purpose that the charm of Whitfield's preaching seems really to have consisted. You feel that you have to do with a man who lived and spoke, and who would gladly have died, to deter his hearers from the path of destruction, and to guide them to holiness and peace. His gossiping stories, and dramatic forms of speech, are never employed to hide the awful realities on which he is intent. Conscience is not permitted to find an intoxicating draught in even spiritual excitement, or an anodyne in glowing imagery. Guilt and its punishment, pardon and spotless purity, death and an eternal existence, stand out in bold relief on every page. From these the eye of the teacher is never withdrawn, and to these the attention of the hearer is riveted. All that is poetic, grotesque, or rapturous, is employed to deepen these impressions, and is dimissed as soon as that purpose is answered. Deficient in learning, meagre in thought, and redundant in language as are these discourses, they yet fulfil the one great condition of genuine eloquence. They propagate their own kindly warmth, and leave their stings behind them.

The enumeration of the sources of Whitfield's power is still essentially defective. Neither energy, nor eloquence, nor histrionic talents, nor any artifices of style, nor the most genuine sincerity and self-devotedness, nor all these united, would have enabled him to mould the religious character of millions in his own and future generations. The secret lies deeper, though not very deep. It consisted in the nature of the theology he taught—in its perfect simplicity and universal application. His thirty or forty thousand sermons were but so many variations on two key-notes. Man is guilty, and may obtain forgiveness; he is immortal, and must ripen here for endless weal or wo hereafter. Expanded into innumerable forms, and diversified by infinite varieties of illustration, these two cardinal principles were ever in his heart and on his tongue. Let who would invoke poetry to embellish the Christian system, or philosophy to explore its esoteric depths, from his lips it was delivered as an awful and urgent summons to repent, to believe, and to obey. To set to music the orders issued to seamen in a storm, or to address them in the language of Aristotle or Descartes, would have seemed to him not a whit more preposterous than to divert his hearers from their danger and their refuge, their duties and their hopes, to any topics more trivial or more abstruse. In fine, he was thoroughly and continually in earnest, and, therefore, possessed that tension of the soul which admitted neither of lassitude nor relaxation, few and familiar as were the topics to which he was confined. His was, therefore, precisely that state of mind in which alone eloquence, properly so called, can be engendered, and a moral and intellectual sovereignty won.

A still more important topic we pass over silently, not as doubting, or reluctant to acknowledge, the reality of that divine influence, of which the greatest benefactors of mankind are at most but the voluntary agents; but because, desiring to observe the proprieties of time and place, we abandon such discussions to pages more sacred than our own.

The effects of Whitfield's labours on succeeding times have been thrown into the shade by the more brilliant fortunes of the ecclesiastical dynasty of which Wesley was at once the founder, the lawgiver, and the head. Yet a large proportion of the American churches, and that great body of the Church of England which, assuming the title of evangelical, has been refused that of orthodox, may trace back their spiritual genealogy, by regular descent from him. It appears, indeed, that there are among them some who, for having disavowed this ancestry, have brought themselves within the swing of Mr. Phillip's club. To rescue them, if it were possible, from the bruises which they have provoked, would be to arrest the legitimate march of penal justice. The consanguinity is attested by historical records and by the strongest family resemblance. The quarterings of Whitfield are entitled to a conspicuous place in the evangelical scutcheon; and they who bear it are not wise in being ashamed of the blazonry.

Four conspicuous names connect the great field-preacher with the evangelical body, as it at present exists in the Church of England. The first of these, Henry Venn, exhibited in a systematic form the doctrines and precepts of the evangelical divinity in a treatise, bearing the insignificant title of the "*New* Whole Duty of Man." He was the founder of that "school of the prophets," which has, to the present day, continued to flourish with unabated or increasing vigour in the University of Cambridge, and the writer of a series of letters which have lately been edited by one of his lineal descendants. They possess the peculiar and very powerful charm of giving utterance to the most profound affections in grave, chaste, and simple language, and indicate a rare subjection of the intellectual, and sensitive, to the spiritual nature—of an intellect of no common vigour, and a sensibility of exquisite acuteness, to a spirit at once elevated and subdued by devout contemplations.

He was followed by Joseph Milner, who, in a history of the Church of Christ, traced, from the days of the Apostles to the Reformation, the perpetual succession of an interior society by which the tenets of the Calvinistic Methodists had been received and transmitted as a sacred deposit from age to age. A man of more spotless truth and honesty than Milner never yet assumed the historical office. But he was encumbered at once by a theory, and by the care of a grammar-school; the one anticipating his judgments, the other narrowing the range of his investigations. His "apparatus" included little more than the New Testament, the Fathers, and the ecclesiastical historians. To explore, to concentrate, and to scrutinize with philosophical scepticism, the evidences by which they are illustrated and explained, was a task unsuited alike to his powers, his devotion, and his taste. He has bequeathed to the world a book which can never lose its interest, either with those who read it to animate their piety, or with those who, in their search for historical truth, are willing not merely to examine the proofs, but to listen to the advocates.

John Newton, most generally known as the friend and spiritual guide of Cowper, has yet better claims to celebrity. For many years the standard-bearer of his section of the Anglican church in London, he was the writer of many works, and especially of an autobiography, which is to be numbered amongst the most singular and impressive delineations of human character. A more rare psychological phenomenon than Newton was never subjected to the examination of the curious. The captain of a slave-ship, given up at one time to all manner of vice and debauchery, gradually emerges into a perfect Oroondates, haunted to the verge of madness by the sentimental Psyche, but is still a slave-trader. He studies the Scriptures and the classics in his cabin, while his captives are writhing in mental and bodily agonies in the hold. With nerves of iron, and sinews of brass, he combines an almost feminine tenderness, and becomes successively the victim of remorse, a penitent, a clergyman, an eminent preacher, an author of no mean pretensions in verse and prose, beloved and esteemed by the wise and good; and at an extreme old age closes in honour, peace, and humble hope, a life of strange vicissitudes, and of still stranger contrasts. The position which he has the courage to challenge for himself in the chronicle of his party, is that of an example of the salutary influence of their principles on a man once given up to reckless guilt. His friends and followers, with more discretion, and at least equal truth, assert for him the praise of having consecrated his riper and declining years to the practice of pure and undefiled religion; and to the inculcation of it with all the vigour of his natural disposition, tempered by a composure and adorned by an elegance, the most remote from his primitive character.

The last of the fathers of the Evangelical Church was Thomas Scott, the author of many books, and amongst these of a treatise called the "Force of Truth," which records his own mental history; and of a Commentary on the Bible, in which the truth he sought and believed himself to have found is discovered in almost every page of the inspired volume. Scott was nothing less than a prodigy of autodidactic knowledge. Bred up in humble life, with little education, regular or irregular, and immersed from youth to age in clerical cares (of which a well-filled nursery and an ill-filled purse seem inevitable parts) he had neither money to multiply books, nor much leisure or inclination to read them. But he studied his congregation, his Bible, and himself. From those investigations, conducted with admirable sagacity, good faith and perseverance, he accumulated a fund of thought indigenous if not original, accurate if not profound, which, considered as the gathering of a solitary mind, is altogether marvellous. In the later editions of his work, indeed, he interspersed such learning as he had derived from subsequent study. But, inverting the established order, he seems to have published his own books first, and to have read those of other men afterwards. Such a process, executed with such zeal and earnestness, if aided by a vivid imagination, would have rendered his speculations instinct with breath and life; if directed by vanity, it would have ascribed to the sacred oracles some wild novelties of meaning at jar with the sense and spirit of their authors; if guided by mercenary views, it would have brought them into harmony with the opinions of the orthodox dispensers of ecclesiastical emoluments and honours. But imagination in the mind of Thomas Scott was not merely wanting, it was a negative quantity; and his chariot-wheels drove heavily. The thirst of praise or of wealth was quenched by a desire as simple and as pure as ever prompted human activity to promote the Divine glory and the good of man. He would have seen the labours of his life perish, and would have perished with them, rather than distort the sense of revelation by a hair's breadth from what he believed to be its genuine meaning. He rendered to his party (if with such a man party can be fitly associated) the inestimable service of showing how their distinguishing tenets may be deduced from the sacred canon, or reconciled with it; and of placing their feet on that which Chillingworth had proclaimed as the rock of the Reformation.

Gradually, however, it came to pass in the Evangelical, as in other societies, that the symbol was adopted by many who were strangers to the spirit of the original institution;—by many an indolent, trivial, or luxurious aspirant to its advantages, both temporal and eternal. The terms of membership had never been definite or severe. Whitfield and his followers had required from those who joined their standard neither the adoption of any new ritual, nor the abandonment of any established ceremonies, nor an irksome submission to ecclesiastical authority, nor the renunciation of any reputable path to eminence or to wealth. The distinguishing tenets are few and easily learned; the necessary observances neither onerous nor unattended with much pleasurable emotion. In the lapse of years the discipline of the society imperceptibly declined, and errors coeval with its existence exhibited themselves in an exaggerated form. When country gentlemen and merchants, lords spiritual and temporal, and even fashionable ladies gave in their adhesion, their dignities uninvaded, their ample expenditure flowing chiefly in its accustomed channels, and their saloons as crowded if not as brilliant as before, the spirit of Whitfield was to be traced among his followers, not so much in the burning zeal and self-devotion of that extraordinary man, as in his insubordination to episcopal rule and unquenchable thirst for spiritual excitement. Although the fields and the market-places no longer echoed to the voice of the impassioned preacher and the hallelujahs of enraptured myriads; yet spacious theatres, sacred to such uses, received a countless host to harangue or to applaud; to recount or to hear adventures of stirring interest; to propagate the Christian faith to the furthest recesses of the globe; to drop the superfluous guinea, and to retire with feelings strangely balanced between the human and the divine, the glories of heaven and the vanities of earth.

The venerable cloisters of Oxford sheltered a new race of students, who listened not without indignation, to the rumours of this religious movement. Invigorated by habitual self-denial; of unsullied, perhaps of austere virtue; with intellectual powers of no vulgar cast; and deeply conversant with Christian antiquity,—they acknowledged a Divine command to recall their country to a piety more profound and masculine, more meek and contemplative. They spoke in the name and with the authority of the "Catholic Church," the supreme interpreter of the holy mysteries confided to her care. That sublime abstraction has not indeed, as of yore, a visible throne and a triple crown; nor can she now point to the successors of the fishermen of Galilee collected into a sacred college at the Vatican. Though still existing in a mysterious unity of communion, faith, and practice, she is present in every land and among all people, where due honour is paid to the episcopal office derived by an unbroken succession from the apostles. Her doctrines are those to which Rome and Constantinople have made some corrupt additions, but which the Ante-Nicene fathers professed and our Anglo-Saxon ancestors adopted. She requires the rigid observance of her ancient formularies, and calls on her children to adore rather than to investigate. She announces tenets which the unlearned must submissively receive with modest self-distrust; inculcates a morality which pervades and sanctifies the most minute, not less than the more considerable of our actions; and demands a piety which is to be avowed not by the utterance of religious sentiments, nor by a retreat from the ordinary pursuits or pleasures of the world, but by the silent tenor of a devout life. If among the teachers of this new or restored divinity, Oxford should raise up another Whitfield, the principles for which the martyrs of the Reformation died might be in peril of at least a temporary subversion, in that church which has for the last three centuries numbered Cranmer, Hooper, and Ridley, amongst her most venerated fathers. The extent of the danger will be best estimated by a short survey of the career of the only confessor of Oxford Catholicism, who has yet taken his place in ecclesiastical biography.

Richard Hurrell Froude was born "on the Feast of the Annunciation" in 1803, and died in 1836. He was an Etonion; a fellow of Oriel college; a priest in holy orders; the writer of journals, letters, sermons, and unsuccessful prize essays; an occasional contributor to the periodical literature of his theological associates; and, during the last four years of his life, a resident alternately in the south of Europe and the West Indies. If the progress of his name to oblivion shall be arrested for some brief interval, it will be owing to the strange discretion with which his surviving friends have disclosed to the world the curious and melancholy portraiture drawn by his own hand of the effects of their peculiar system. "The extreme importance of the views to the development of which the whole is meant to be subservient," and "the instruction derivable from a full exhibition of his character as a witness to those views," afford the inadequate apology for inviting the world to read a self-examination as frank and unreserved as the most courageous man could have committed to paper in this unscrupulous and inquisitive generation. Yet, if the editors of Mr. Froude's papers are the depositaries of those which his mother appears to have written, and will publish them also, it will be impossible to refuse them absolution from whatever penalties they may have already incurred. These volumes contain but one letter from that lady; and it contrasts with the productions of her son as the voice of a guardian angel with the turbulent language of a spirit to which it had been appointed to minister. She read his heart with a mother's sagacity, and thus revealed it to himself with a mother's tenderness and truth.

"From his very birth his temper has been peculiar; pleasing, intelligent, and attaching, when his mind was undisturbed and he was in the company of people who treated him reasonably and kindly; but exceedingly impatient under vexatious circumstances; very much disposed to find his own amusement in teasing and vexing others; and almost entirely incorrigible when it was necessary to reprove him. I never could find a successful mode of treating him. Harshness made him obstinate and gloomy; calm and long displeasure made him stupid and sullen; and kind patience had not sufficient power over his feelings to force him to govern himself. After a statement of such great faults, it may seem an inconsistency to say, that he nevertheless still bore about him strong marks of a promising character. In all points of substantial principle his feelings were just and high. He had (for his age) an unusually deep feeling of admiration for every thing which was good and noble; his relish was lively and his taste good, for all the pleasures of the imagination; and he was also quite conscious of his own faults, and (untempted) had a just dislike to them."

Though the mother and the child are both beyond the reach of all human opinion, it seems almost an impiety to transcribe her estimate of his early character, and to add, that, when developed and matured in his riper years, it but too distinctly fulfilled her less favourable judgment. Exercising a stern and absolute dominion over all the baser passions, with a keen perception of the beautiful in nature and in art, and a deep homage for the sublime in morals; imbued with the spirit of the classical authors, and delighting in the strenuous exercise of talents which, if they fell short of excellence, rose far above mediocrity, Mr. Froude might have seemed to want no promise of an honourable rank in literature, or of distinction in his sacred office. His career was intercepted by a premature death, but enough is recorded to show that his aspirations, however noble, must have been defeated by the pride and moroseness which his mother's wisdom detected, and which her love disclosed to him; united as they were to a constitutional distrust of his own powers and a weak reliance on other minds for guidance and support. A spirit at once haughty and unsustained by genuine self-confidence; subdued by the stronger will or intellect of other men, and glorying in that subjection; regarding its opponents with an intolerance exceeding their own; and, in the midst of all, turning with no infrequent indignation on itself—might form the basis of a good dramatic sketch, of which Mr. Froude might not unworthily sustain the burden. But a "dialogue of the dead," in which George Whitfield and Richard Froude should be the interlocutors, would be a more appropriate channel for illustrating the practical uses of "the second reformation," and of the "Catholic restoration," which it is the object of their respective biographies to illustrate. Rhadamanthus having dismissed them from his tribunal, they would compare together their juvenile admiration of the drama, their ascetic discipline at Oxford, their early dependence on stronger or more resolute minds, their propensity to self-observation and to record its results on paper, their opinions of the negro race, and the surprise with which they witnessed the worship of the Church of Rome in lands where it is still triumphant. So far all is peace, and the *concordes animæ* exchange such greetings as pass between disembodied spirits. But when the tidings brought by the new denizen of the Elysian fields to the reformer of the eighteenth century, reach his affrighted shade, the regions of the blessed are disturbed by an unwonted discord; and the fiery soul of Whitfield blazes with intense desire to resume his wanderings through the earth, and to lift up his voice against the new apostasy.

It was with no unmanly dread of the probe, but from want of skill or leisure to employ it, that the self-scrutiny of Whitfield seldom or never penetrated much below the surface. Preach he must; and when no audience could be brought together, he seized a pen and exhorted himself. The uppermost feeling, be it what it may, is put down in his journal honestly, vigorously and devoutly. Satan is menaced and upbraided. Intimations from Heaven are recorded without one painful doubt of their origin. He prays and exults, anticipates the future with delight, looks back to the past with thankfulness, blames himself simply because he thinks himself to blame, despairs of nothing, fears nothing, and has not a moment's ill-will to any human being.

Mr. Froude conducts his written soliloquies in a different spirit. His introverted gaze analyzes with elaborate minuteness the various motives at the confluence of which his active powers receive their impulse, and, with perverted sagacity, pursues the self-examination, until, bewildered in the dark labyrinth of his own nature, he escapes to the cheerful light of day by locking up his journal. "A friend" (whose real name is as distinctly intimated under its initial letter as if the patronymic were written at length) "advises burning confessions. I cannot make up my mind to that," replies the penitent, "but I think I can see many points in which it will be likely to do me good to be cut off for some time from these records." On such a subject the author of "The Christian Year" was entitled to more deference. The great ornament of the College *de Propaganda* at Oxford, he also had used the mental microscope to excess. Admonishing men to approach their Creator not as isolated beings, but as members of the Universal Church, and teaching the inmates of her hallowed courts to worship in strains so pure, so reverent, and so meek, as to answer not unworthily to the voice of hope and reconciliation in which she is addressed by her Divine Head, yet had this "sweet singer" so brooded over the evanescent processes of his own spiritual nature, as not seldom to throw round his meaning a haze which rendered it imperceptible to his readers and probably to himself. With what sound judgment he counselled Mr. Froude to burn his books may be judged from the following entries in them:

"I have been talking a great deal to B. about religion to-day. He seems to take such straightforward practical views of it that, when I am talking to him, I wonder what I have been bothering myself with all the summer, and almost doubt how far it is right to allow myself to indulge in speculations on a subject where all that is necessary is so plain and obvious."—"Yesterday when I went out shooting, I fancied I did not care whether I hit or not, but when it came to the point I found myself anxious, and, after having killed, was not unwilling to let myself be considered a better shot than I had described myself. I had an impulse, too, to let it be thought I had only three shots when I really had had four. It was slight, to be sure, but I felt it."—"I have read my journal, though I can hardly identify myself with the person it describes. It seems like leaving some one under one's guardianship who was an intolerable fool, and exposed himself to my contempt every moment for the most ridiculous and trifling motives; and while I was thinking all this, I went into L.'s room to seek a pair of shoes, and on hearing him coming got away as silently as possible. Why did I do this? Did I think I was doing what L. did not like, or was it the relic of a sneaking habit? I will ask myself these questions again."—"I have a sort of vanity which aims at my own good opinion, and I look for any thing to prove to myself that I am more anxious to mind myself than other people. I was very hungry, but because I thought the charge unreasonable, I tried to shirk the waiter; sneaking!"—"Yesterday I was much put out by an old fellow chewing tobacco and spitting across me; also bad thoughts of various kinds kept presenting themselves to my mind when it was vacant."—"I talked sillily to-day as I used to do last term, but took no pleasure in it, so I am not ashamed. Although I don't recollect any harm of myself, yet I don't feel that I have made a clean breast of it."—"I forgot to mention that I had been looking round my rooms and thinking that they looked comfortable and nice, and that I said in my heart, Ah, ha! I am warm."—"It always suggests itself to me that a wise thought is wasted when it is kept to myself, against which, as it is my most bothering temptation, I will set down some arguments to be called to mind in time of trouble."—"Now I am proud of this, and think that the knowledge it shows of myself implies a greatness of mind."—"These records are no guide to me to show the state of my mind afterwards; they are so far from being exercises of humility, that they lessen the shame of what I record just as professions and good-will to other people reconcile us to our neglect of them."

The precept "know thyself," came down from heaven; but such self-knowledge as this has no heavenward tendency. It is no part of the economy of our nature, or of the will of our Maker, that we should so cunningly unravel the subtle filaments of which our motives are composed. If a man should subject to such a scrutiny the feelings of others to himself, he would soon lose his faith in human virtue and affection; and the mind which should thus put to the question its own workings in the domestic or social relations of life would ere long become the victim of a still more fatal skepticism. Why dream that this reflex operation, which, if directed towards those feelings of which our fellow-creatures are the object, would infallibly eject from the heart all love and all respect for man, should strengthen either the love or the fear of God? A well-tutored conscience aims at breadth rather than minuteness of survey; and tasks itself much more to ascertain general results than to find out the solution of riddles. So long as religious men must reveal their "experiences," and self-defamation revels in its present impunity, there is no help for it, but in withholding the applause to which even lowliness itself aspires for the candour with which it is combined, and the acuteness by which it is embellished.

It is not by these nice self-observers that the creeds of hoar antiquity, and the habits of centuries are to be shaken; nor is such high emprize reserved for ascetics who can pause to enumerate the slices of bread and butter from which they have abstained. When Whitfield would mortify his body, he set about it like a man. The paroxysm was short, indeed, but terrible. While it lasted his diseased imagination brought soul and body into deadly conflict, the fierce spirit spurning, trampling, and well-nigh destroying the peccant carcass. Not so the fastidious and refined "witness to the views" of the restorers of the Catholic Church. The strife between his spiritual and animal nature is recorded in his journal in such terms as these:—"Looked with greediness to see if there was goose on the table for dinner."—"Meant to have kept a fast, and did abstain from dinner, but at tea ate buttered toast."—"Tasted nothing to-day till tea-time, and then only one cup and dry bread."—"I have kept my fast strictly, having taken nothing till near nine this evening, and then only a cup of tea and a little bread without butter; but it has not been as easy as it was last."—"I made rather a more hearty tea than usual, quite giving up the notion of a fast in W.'s rooms, and by this weakness have occasioned another slip."

Whatever may be thought of the propriety of disclosing such passages as these, they will provoke a contemptuous smile from no one who knows much of his own heart. But they may relieve the anxiety of the alarmists. Luther and Zuingle, Cranmer, and Latimer, may still rest in their honoured graves. "Take courage, brother Ridley, we shall light up such a flame in England as shall not soon be put out," is a prophecy which will not be defeated by the successors of those who heard it, so long as their confessors shall be vacant to record, and their doctors to publish, contrite reminiscences of a desire for roasted goose, and of an undue indulgence in buttered toast.

Yet the will to subvert the doctrines and discipline of the Reformation is not wanting, and is not concealed. Mr. Froude himself, were he still living, might, indeed, object to be judged by his careless and familiar letters. No such objection can, however, be made by the eminent persons who have deliberately given them to the world on account of "the truth and extreme importance of the views to which the whole is meant to be subservient," and in which they record their "own general concurrence." Of these weighty truths take the following examples:

"You will be shocked at my avowal that I am every day becoming a less and less loyal son of the Reformation. It appears to me plain, that in all matters which seem to us indifferent, or even doubtful, we should conform our practices to those of the Church, which has preserved its traditionary practices unbroken. We cannot know about any seemingly indifferent practice of the Church of Rome that is not a development of the apostolic ηθος, and it is to no purpose to say that we can find no proof of it in the writings of the first six centuries—they must find a disproof if they would do any thing."—"I think people are injudicious who talk against the Roman Catholics for worshipping saints and honouring the Virgin and images, &c. These things may, perhaps, be idolatrous; I cannot make up my mind about it."—"P. called us the Papal Protestant Church, in which he proved a double ignorance, as we are Catholics without the popery, and Church of England men without the protestantism."—"The more I think over that view of yours about regarding our present communion service, &c., as a judgment on the Church, and taking it as the crumbs from the apostle's table, the more I am struck with its fitness to be dwelt upon as tending to check the intrusion of irreverent thoughts, without in any way interfering with one's just indignation."—"Your trumpery principle about Scripture being the sole rule of faith in fundamentals (I nauseate the word) is but a mutilated edition, without the breadth and axiomatic character, of the original."—"Really I hate the Reformation and the reformers more and more, and have almost made up my mind that the rationalist spirit they set afloat is the ψευδοπροφητης of the Revelation." Why do you praise Ridley? Do you know sufficient good about him to counterbalance the fact, that he was the associate of Cranmer, Peter Martyr, and Bucer?"—"I wish you could get to know something of S. and W. (Southey and Wordsworth) and unprotestantize and un-Miltonize them."—"*How is it* WE *are so much in advance of our generation?*"

Spirit of George Whitfield! how would thy voice, rolled from "the secret place of thunders," have overwhelmed these puny protests against the truths which it proclaimed from the rising to the setting sun! In what does the modern creed of Oxford differ from the ancient faith of Rome? Hurried along by the abhorred current of advancing knowledge and social improvement, they have indeed renounced papal dominion, and denied papal infallibility, and rejected the grosser superstitions which Rome herself at once despises and promotes. But a prostrate submission to human authority (though veiled under words of vague and mysterious import)—the repose of the wearied or indolent mind on external observances—an escape from the arduous exercise of man's highest faculties in the worship of his Maker—the usurped dominion of the imaginative and sensitive over the intellectual powers—these are the common characteristics of both systems.

The Reformation restored to the Christian world its only authentic canon, and its one Supreme Head. It proclaimed the Scriptures as the rule of life; and the Divine Redeemer as the supreme and central object to whom every eye must turn, and on whom every hope must rest. It cast down not only the idols erected for the adoration of the vulgar, but the idolatrous abstractions to which the worship of more cultivated minds was rendered. Penetrating the design, and seizing the spirit of the gospels, the reformers inculcated the faith in which the sentient and the spiritual in man's compound nature had each its appropriate office; the one directed to the Redeemer in his palpable form, the other to the Divine Paraclete in his hidden agency; while, united with these, they exhibited to a sinful but penitent race the parental character of the Omnipresent Deity. Such is not the teaching of the restored theology. The most eminent of its professors have thrown open the doors of Mr. Froude's oratory, and have invited all passers-by to notice in his prayers and meditations "the absence of any distinct mention of our Lord and Saviour." They are exhorted not to doubt that there was a real though silent "allusion to Christ" under the titles in which the Supreme Being is addressed; and are told that "this circumstance may be a comfort to those who cannot bring themselves to assume the tone of many popular writers of this day, who yet are discouraged by the peremptoriness with which it is exacted of them. The truth is, that a mind alive to its own real state often shrinks to utter what it most dwells upon; and is too full of awe and fear to do more than silently hope what it most wishes." It would indeed be presumptuous to pass a censure, or to hazard an opinion, on the private devotions of any man; but there is no such risk in rejecting the apology which the publishers of those secret exercises have advanced for Mr. Froude's departure from the habits of his fellow Christians. Feeble, indeed, and emasculate must be the system, which, in its delicate distaste for the "popular writers of the day," would bury in silence the name in which every tongue and language has been summoned to worship and to rejoice. Well may "awe and fear" become all who assume and all who invoke it. But an "awe" which "shrinks to utter" the name of Him who was born at Bethlehem, and yet does not fear to use the name which is ineffable;—a "fear" which can make mention of the Father, but may not speak of the Brother, of all—is a feeling which fairly baffles comprehension. There is a much more simple, though a less imposing theory. Mr. Froude permitted himself, and was encouraged by his correspondents, to indulge in the language of antipathy and scorn towards a large body of his fellow Christians. It tinges his letters, his journals, and is not without its influence even on his devotions. Those despised men too often celebrated the events of their Redeemer's life, and the benefits of his passion, in language of offensive familiarity, and invoked him with fond and feeble epithets. Therefore, a good Oxford Catholic must envelope in mystic terms all allusion to Him round whom as its centre the whole Christian system revolves. The line of demarcation between themselves and these coarse sentimentalists must be broad and deep, even though it should exclude those by whom it is run, from all the peculiar and distinctive ground on which the standard of the Protestant churches has been erected. There is nothing to dread from such hostility and such enemies. A fine lady visits the United States, and, in loathing against the tobacconized republic, becomes an absolutist. A "double first-class" theologian overhears the Evangelical psalmody, and straightway turns Catholic. But Congress will not dissolve at the bidding of the fair; nor will Exeter hall be closed to propitiate the fastidious. The martyrs of disgust and the heroes of revolutions are composed of opposite materials, and are cast in very different moulds. Nothing truly great or formidable was ever yet accomplished, in thought or action, by men whose love for truth was not strong enough to triumph over their dislike of the offensive objects with which it may be associated.

Mr. Froude was the victim of these associations. Nothing escapes his abhorrence which has been regarded with favour by his political or religious antagonists. The Bill for the Abolition of Slavery was recommended to Parliament by an administration more than suspected of liberalism. The "Witness to Catholic Views," "in whose sentiments as a whole," his editors concur, visits the West Indies, and they are not afraid to publish the following report of his feelings:—"I have felt it a kind of duty to maintain in my mind an habitual hostility to the niggers, and to chuckle over the failures of the new system, as if these poor wretches concentrated in themselves all the whiggery, dissent, cant, and abomination that have been ranged on their side." Lest this should pass for a pleasant extravagance, the editors enjoin the reader not to "confound the author's view of the negro cause and of the *abstract negro* with his feelings towards any he should exactly meet;" and Professor Tholuck is summoned from Germany to explain how the "originators of error" may lawfully be the objects of a good man's hate, and how it may innocently overflow upon all their clients, kindred, and connexions. Mr. Froude's feelings towards the "abstract negro" would have satisfied the learned professor in his most indignant mood. "I am ashamed," he says, "I cannot get over my prejudices against the niggers."—"Every one I meet seems to me like an incarnation of the whole Anti-Slavery Society, and Fowell Buxton at their head."—"The thing that strikes me as most remarkable in the cut of these niggers is excessive immodesty, a forward, stupid familiarity intended for civility, which prejudices me against them worse even than Buxton's cant did. It is getting to be the fashion with every body, even the planters, to praise the emancipation and Mr. Stanley." Mr. Froude, or rather his editors, appear to have fallen into the error of supposing that his profession gave him not merely the right to admonish, but the privilege to scold. Lord Stanley and Mr. Buxton have, however, the consolation of being railed at in good company. Hampden is "hated" with much zeal, though, it is admitted, with imperfect knowledge. Louis Philippe, and his associates of the Three Days, receive the following humane benediction—"I sincerely hope the march of mind in France *may yet prove a bloody one*." "The election of the wretched B. for ——, and that base fellow, H. for ——, in spite of the exposure," &c. Again, the editors protest against our supposing that this is a playful exercise in the art of exaggeration. "It should be observed," they say, "as in other parts of this volume, that the author used these words on principle, not as abuse, but as expressing matters of fact, as a way of bringing before his own mind things as they are."

Milton, however, is the especial object of Mr. Froude's virtuous abhorrence. He is "a detestable author." Mr. Froude rejoices to learn something of the puritans, because, as he says, "It gives me a better right to hate Milton, and accounts for many of the things which most disgusted me in his (not in my sense of the word) poetry."—"A lady told me yesterday that you wrote the article of Sacred Poetry, &c. I thought it did not come up to what I thought your standard of aversion to Milton." Mr. Froude and his editors must be delivered over to the secular arm under the writ *De Heretico Comburando* for their wilful obstinacy in rejecting the infallible sentence of the fathers and œcumenical counsels of the church poetical, on this article of faith. There is no room for mercy. They did not belong to the audience, meet but few, to whom the immortal addressed himself—to that little company to which alone it is reserved to estimate the powers of such a mind, and reverently to notice its defects. They were of that multitude who have to make their choice between repeating the established creed and holding their peace. Why are free-thinkers in literature to be endured more than in religion? The guilt of liberalism has clearly been contracted by this rash judgment; and Professor Tholuck being the witness, it exposes the criminals and the whole society of Oriel, nay, the entire University itself, to the diffusive indignation of all who cling to the Catholic faith in poetry.

There are much better things in Mr. Froude's book than the preceding quotations might appear to promise. If given as specimens of his power, they would do gross injustice to a good and able man, a ripe scholar, and a devout Christian. But as illustrations of the temper and opinions of those who now sit in Wycliffe's seat, they are neither unfair nor unimportant. And they may also convince all whom it concerns, that hitherto, at least, Oxford has not given birth to a new race of giants, by whom the evangelical founders and missionaries of the Church of England will be expelled from their ancient dominion, or the Protestant world excluded from the light of day and the free breath of heaven.

Whenever the time shall be ripe for writing the ecclesiastical history of the last and the present age, a curious chapter may be devoted to the rise and progress of the Evangelical body in England from the days of Whitfield to our own. It will convey many important lessons. It will manifest the irresistible power of the doctrines of the Reformation when proclaimed with honesty and zeal, even though its teachers be unskilled in those studies which are essential to a complete and comprehensive theology. It will show that infirmities which, not without some reason, offend the more cultivated, and disgust the more fastidious members of the Catholic Church amongst us, are but as the small dust in the balance, when weighed against the mighty energy of those cardinal truths in the defence of which Wycliffe and Luther, Knox and Calvin, Ridley and Latimer, lived and laboured, and died. It may also prove that recondite learning, deep piety and the purest virtue may be all combined in bosoms which are yet contracted by narrow and unsuspected prejudices. But, above all, it may teach mutual charity; admonishing men to listen with kindness and self-distrust even to each other's extravagant claims to an exclusive knowledge of the Divine will, and the exclusive possession of the Divine favour.

D'AUBIGNÉ'S HISTORY OF THE GREAT REFORMATION.[*]

[Edinburgh Review, 1839.]

English literature is singularly defective in whatever relates to the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, and to the lives of the great men by whom it was accomplished. A native of this island who would know any thing to the purpose, of Reuchlin or Hutten, or Luther or Melancthon, of Zuingle, Bucer or Œcolampadius, of Calvin or Farel, must betake himself to other languages than his own. To fill this void in our libraries, is an enterprise which might stimulate the zeal, and establish the reputation of the ripest student of Ecclesiastical History amongst us. In no other field could he discover more ample resources for narratives of dramatic interest; for the delineation of characters contrasted in every thing except their common design; for exploring the influence of philosophy, arts, and manners, on the fortunes of mankind; and for reverently tracing the footsteps of Divine Providence, moving among the ways and works of men, imparting dignity to events otherwise unimportant, and a deep significance to occurrences in any other view as trivial as a border raid, or the palaver of an African village.

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[*] *History of the Great Reformation of the Sixteenth Century, in Germany, Switzerland, &c.* By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, President of the Theological School of *Geneva. 8vo. Vol. I.* London, 1838.

Take, for example, the life of Ulric de Hutten, a noble, a warrior, and a rake; a theologian withal, and a reformer; and at the same time the author, or one of the authors, of a satire to be classed amongst the most effective which the world has ever seen. Had the recreative powers of Walter Scott been exercised on Hutten's story, how familiar would all Christendom have been with the stern Baron of Franconia, and Ulric, his petulant boy; with the fat Abbot of Foulde driving the fiery youth by penances and homilies to range a literary vagabond on the face of the earth; with the burgomaster of Frankfort, avenging by a still more formidable punishment the pasquinade which had insulted his civic dignity. How vivid would be the image of Hutten at the siege of Pavia, soothing despair itself by writing his own epitaph; giving combat to five Frenchmen for the glory of Maximilian; and receiving from the delighted emperor the frugal reward of a poetic crown. Then would have succeeded the court and princely patronage of "the Pope of Mentz," and the camp and the castle of the Lord of Sickengen, until the chequered scene closed with Ulric's death-bed employment of producing a satire on his stupid physician. All things were welcome to Hutten; arms and love, theology and debauchery, a disputation with the Thomists, a controversy with Erasmus, or a war to the knife with the dunces of his age. His claim to have written the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, has, indeed, been disputed, though with little apparent reason. It is at least clear that he asserted his own title, and that no other candidate for that equivocal honour united in himself the wit and learning, the audacity and licentiousness, which successively adorn and disfigure that extraordinary collection. Neither is it quite just to exclude the satirist from the list of those who lent a material aid to the Reformation. It is not, certainly, by the heartiest or the most contemptuous laugh that dynasties, whether civil or religious, are subverted; but it would be unfair to deny altogether to Hutten the praise of having contributed by his merciless banter to the successes of wiser and better men than himself. To set on edge the teeth of the Ciceronians by the Latinity of the correspondents of the profound Ortuinus, was but a pleasant jest; but it was something more to confer an immorality of ridicule on the erudite doctors who seriously apprehended, from the study of Greek and Hebrew, the revival at once of the worship of Minerva, and of the rite of circumcision. It was in strict satirical justice, that characters were assigned to these sages in a farce as broad as was ever drawn by Aristophanes or Moliere; and which was destitute neither of their riotous mirth, nor even of some of that deep wisdom which it was their pleasure to exhibit beneath that mask.

Much as Luther, himself, *asper, incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit*, he received with little relish these sallies of his facetious ally; whom he not only censured for employing the language of reproach and insult, but, harder still, described as a buffoon. It is, perhaps, well for the dignity of the stern reformer that the taunt was unknown to the object of it; for, great as he was, Hutten would not have spared him; and as the quiver of few satirists has been stored with keener or more envenomed shafts, so, few illustrious men have exposed to such an assailant a greater number of vulnerable points. But of these, or of his other private habits, little is generally recorded. History having claimed Luther for her own, biography has yielded to the pretensions of her more stately sister; and the domestic and interior life of the antagonist of Leo and of Charles yet remains to be written. The materials are abundant, and of the highest interest;—a collection of letters scarcely less voluminous than those of Voltaire; the *Colloquia Mensalia*, in some parts of more doubtful authenticity, yet, on the whole, a genuine record of his conversation; his theological writings, a mine of egotisms of the richest ore; and the works of Melancthon, Seckendorf, Cochlœus, Erasmus, and many others, who flourished in an age when, amongst learned men, to write and to live were almost convertible terms. The volume whose title-page we have transcribed, is, in fact, an unfinished life of Luther, closing with his appeal from the pope to a general council. We have selected it as the most elaborate, from a long catalogue of works on the Reformation, recently published on the continent, by the present inheritors of the principles and passions which first agitated Europe in the beginning of the sixteenth century. By far the most amusing of the series is the collection of *Lutheriana* by M. Michelet, which we are bound to notice with especial gratitude, as affording a greater number of valuable references than all other books of the same kind put together. It was drawn up as a relaxation from those severer studies on which M. Michelet's historical fame depends. But the pastime of some men is worth far more than the labours of the rest; and this compilation has every merit but that of an appropriate title; for an auto-biography it assuredly is not, in any of the senses, accurate or popular, of that much abused word. Insulated in our habits and pursuits, not less than in our geographical position, it is but tardily that, within the entrenchment of our four seas, we sympathize with the intellectual movements of the nations which dwell beyond them. Many, however, are the motives, of at least equal force in these islands as in the old and new continents of the Christian world, for diverting the eye from the present to the past, from those who would now reform, to those who first reformed, the churches of Europe. Or, if graver reasons could not be found, it is beyond all dispute that the professors of Wittemburg, three hundred years ago, formed a group as much more entertaining than those of Oxford at present, as the contest with Dr. Eck exceeded in interest the squabble with Dr. Hampden.

The old Adam in Martin Luther (a favourite subject of his discourse) was a very formidable personage; lodged in a bodily frame of surpassing vigour, solicited by vehement appetites, and alive to all the passions by which man is armed for offensive or defensive warfare with his fellows. In accordance with a general law, that temperament was sustained by nerves which shrunk neither from the endurance nor the infliction of necessary pain; and by a courage which rose at the approach of difficulty, and exulted in the presence of danger. A rarer prodigality of nature combined with these endowments an inflexible reliance on the conclusions of his own understanding, and on the energy of his own will. He came forth on the theatre of life another Samson Agonistes "with plain heroic magnitude of mind, and celestial vigour armed;" ready to wage an unequalled combat with the haughtiest of the giants of Gath; or to shake down, though it were on his own head, the columns of the proudest of her temples. Viewed in his belligerent aspect, he might have seemed a being cut off from the common brotherhood of mankind, and bearing from on high a commission to bring to pass the remote ends of Divine benevolence, by means appalling to human guilt and to human weakness. But he was reclaimed into the bosom of the great family of man, by bonds fashioned in strength and number proportioned to the vigour of the propensities they were intended to control. There brooded over him a constitutional melancholy, sometimes engendering sadness, but more often giving birth to dreams so wild, that, if vivified by the imagination of Dante, they might have passed into visions as awful and majestic as those of the *Inferno*. As these mists rolled away, bright gleams of sunshine took their place, and that robust mind yielded itself to social enjoyments, with the hearty relish, the broad humour, and the glorious profusion of sense and nonsense, which betoken the relaxations of those who are for the moment abdicating the mastery, to become the companions of ordinary man. Luther had other and yet more potent spells with which to exorcise the demons who haunted him. He had ascertained and taught that the spirit of darkness abhors sweet sounds not less than light itself; for music, while it chases away the evil suggestions, effectually baffles the wiles of the tempter. His lute, and hand, and voice, accompanying his own solemn melodies, were therefore raised to repel the more vehement aggressions of the enemy of mankind; whose feebler assaults he encountered by studying the politics of a rookery, by assigning to each beautiful creation of his flower-beds an appropriate sylph or genius, by the company of his Catherine de Bora, and the sports of their saucy John and playful Magdalene.

The name of Catherine has long enjoyed a wide but doubtful celebrity. She was a lady of noble birth, and was still young when she renounced the ancient faith, her convent, and her vows, to become the wife of Martin Luther. From this portentous union of a monk and nun, the "obscure men" confidently predicted the birth of Antichrist; while the wits and scholars greeted their nuptials with a thick hail-storm of epigrams, hymns, and dithyrambics, the learned Eccius himself chiming into the loud chorus with an elaborate epithalamium. The bridegroom met the tempest, with the spirit of another Benedict, by a counterblast of invective and sarcasms, which, afterwards collected under the head of "the Lion and the Ass," perpetuated the memory of this redoubtable controversy. "My enemies," he exclaimed, "triumphed. They shouted, *Io, Io!* I was resolved to show that, old and feeble as I am, I am not going to sound a retreat. I trust I shall do still more to spoil their merriment."

This indiscreet, if not criminal marriage, scarcely admitted a more serious defence. Yet Luther was not a man to do any thing which he was not prepared to justify. He had inculcated on others the advantages of the conjugal state, and was bound to enforce his precepts by his example. The war of the peasants had brought reproach on the principles of the Reformation; and it was incumbent on him to sustain the minds of his followers, and to bear his testimony to evangelical truth by deeds as well as words. Therefore, it was fit that he should marry a nun. Such is the logic of inclination, and such the presumption of uninterrupted success. "Dr. Ortuinas" himself never lent his venerable sanction to a stranger sophistry, than that which could thus discover in one great scandal an apology for another far more justly offensive.

Catherine was a very pretty women, if Holbein's portrait may be believed; although even her personal charms have been rudely impugned by her husband's enemies, in grave disquisitions devoted to that momentous question. Better still, she was a faithful and affectionate wife. But there is a no less famous Catherine to whom she bore a strong family resemblance. She brought from her nunnery an anxious mind, a shrewish temper, and great volubility of speech. Luther's arts were not those of Petruchio. With him reverence for woman was at once a natural instinct and a point of doctrine. He observed, that when the first woman was brought to the first man to receive her name, he called her not wife, but mother—"Eve, the mother of all living"—a word, he says, "more eloquent than ever fell from the lips of Demosthenes." So, like a wise and kind-hearted man, when his Catherine prattled, he smiled; when she frowned, he playfully stole away her anger, and chided her anxieties with the gentlest soothing. A happier or a more peaceful home was not to be found in the land of domestic tenderness. Yet, the confession must be made, that, from the first to the last, this love-tale is nothing less than a case of *læsa majestas* against the sovereignty of romance. Luther and his bride did not meet on either side with the raptures of a first affection. He had long before sighed for the fair Ave Shonfelden, and she had not concealed her attachment for a certain Jerome Baungartner. Ave had bestowed herself in marriage on a physician of Prussia; and before Luther's irrevocable vows were pledged, Jerome received from his great rival an intimation that he still possessed the heart, and, with common activity, might even yet secure the hand of Catherine. But honest Jerome was not a man to be hurried. He silently resigned his pretensions to his illustrious competitor, who, even in the moment of success, had the discernment to perceive, and the frankness to avow, that his love was not of a flaming or ungovernable nature.

"Nothing on this earth," said the good Dame Ursula Schweickard, with whom Luther boarded when at school at Eisenach, "is of such inestimable value as a woman's love." This maxim, recommended more, perhaps, by truth than originality, dwelt long on the mind and on the tongue of the reformer. To have dismissed this or any other text without a commentary would have been abhorrent from his temper; and in one of his letters to Catherine he thus insists on a kindred doctrine, the converse of the first. "The greatest favour of God is to have a good and pious husband, to whom you can intrust your all, your person, and even your life; whose children and yours are the same. Catherine, you have a pious husband who loves you. You are an empress; thank God for it." His conjugal meditations were often in a gayer mood; as, for example,—"If I were going to make love again, I would carve an obedient woman out of marble, in despair of finding one in any other way."—"During the first year of our marriage, she would sit by my side while I was at my books, and, not having any thing else to say, would ask me whether in Prussia the margrave and the house steward were not always brothers.—Did you say your Pater, Catherine, before you began that sermon? If you had, I think you would have been forbidden to preach." He addresses her sometimes as my Lord Catherine, or Catherine the queen, the empress, the doctoress; or as Catherine the rich and noble Lady of Zeilsdorf, where they had a cottage and a few roods of ground. But as age advanced, these playful sallies were abandoned for the following graver and more affectionate style. "To the gracious Lady Catherine Luther, my dear wife, who vexes herself overmuch, grace and peace in the Lord! Dear Catherine, you should read St. John, and what is said in the catechism of the confidence to be reposed in God. Indeed, you torment yourself as though he were not Almighty, and could not produce new Doctors Martin by the score, if the old doctor should drown himself in the Saal."—"There is one who watches over me more effectually than thou canst, or than all the angels. He sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty. Therefore be calm."

There were six children of this marriage; and it is at once touching and amusing to see with what adroitness Luther contrived to gratify at once his tenderness as a father, and his taste as a theologian. When the brightening eye of one of the urchins round his table confessed the allurements of a downy peach, it was "the image of a soul rejoicing in hope." Over an infant pressed to his mother's bosom, thus moralized the severe but affectionate reformer: "That babe and every thing else which belongs to us is hated by the pope, by Duke George, by their adherents, and by all the devils. Yet, dear little fellow, he troubles himself not a whit for all these powerful enemies, he gayly sucks the breast, looks round him with a loud laugh, and lets them storm as they like." There were darker seasons, when even theology and polemics gave way to the more powerful voice of nature; nor, indeed, has the deepest wisdom any thing to add to his lamentation over the bier of his daughter Magdalene. "Such is the power of natural affection, that I cannot endure this without tears and groans, or rather an utter deadness of heart. At the bottom of my soul are engraved her looks, her words, her gestures, as I gazed at her in lifetime and on her death-bed. My dutiful, my gentle daughter! Even the death of Christ (and what are all deaths compared to his?) cannot tear me from this thought as it should. She was playful, lovely, and full of love!"

Whatever others may think of these nursery tales, we have certain reasons of our own for suspecting that there is not, on either side of the Tweed, a *papa*, who will not read the following letter, sent by Luther to his eldest boy during the Diet of Augsburg, with more interest than any of all the five "Confessions" presented to the emperor on that memorable occasion.

"Grace and peace be with thee, my dear little boy! I rejoice to find that you are attentive to your lessons and your prayers. Persevere, my child, and when I come home I will bring you some pretty fairing. I know of a beautiful garden, full of children in golden dresses, who run about under the trees, eating apples, pears, cherries, nuts, and plums. They jump and sing and are full of glee, and they have pretty little horses with golden bridles and silver saddles. As I went by this garden I asked the owner of it who those children were, and he told me that they were the good children, who loved to say their prayers, and to learn their lessons, and who fear God. Then I said to him, Dear sir, I have a boy, little John Luther; may not he too come to this garden, to eat these beautiful apples and pears, to ride these pretty little horses, and to play with the other children? And the man said, If he is very good, if he says his prayers, and learns his lessons cheerfully he may come, and he may bring with him little Philip and little James. Here they will find fifes and drums and other nice instruments to play upon, and they shall dance and shoot with little crossbows. Then the man showed me in the midst of the garden a beautiful meadow to dance in. But all this happened in the morning before the children had dined; so I could not stay till the beginning of the dance, but I said to the man, I will go and write to my dear little John, and teach him to be good, to say his prayers, and learn his lessons, that he may come to this garden. But he has an Aunt Magdalene, whom he loves very much,—may he bring her with him? The man said, Yes, tell him that they may come together. Be good, therefore, dear child, and tell Philip and James the same, that you may all come and play in this beautiful garden. I commit you to the care of God

Give my love to your Aunt Magdalene, and kiss her for me. From your papa who loves you,—Martin Luther."

If it is not a sufficient apology for the quotation of this fatherly epistle to say, that it is the talk of Martin Luther, a weightier defence may be drawn from the remark that it illustrates one of his most serious opinions. The views commonly received amongst Christians, of the nature of the happiness reserved in another state of being, for the obedient and faithful in this life, he regarded, if not as erroneous, yet as resting on no sufficient foundation, and as ill adapted to "allure to brighter worlds." He thought that the enjoyments of heaven had been refined away to such a point of evanescent spirituality as to deprive them of their necessary attraction; and the allegory invented for the delight of little John, was but the adaptation to the thoughts of a child of a doctrine which he was accustomed to inculcate on others, under imagery more elevated than that of drums, crossbows and golden bridles.

There is but one step from the nursery to the servant's hall; and they who have borne with the parental counsels to little John, may endure the following letter respecting an aged namesake of his, who was about to quit Luther's family:

"We must dismiss old John with honour. We know that he has always served us faithfully and zealously, and as became a Christian servant. What have we not given to vagabonds and thankless students who have made a bad use of our money? So we will not be niggardly to so worthy a servant, on whom our money will be bestowed in a manner pleasing to God. You need not remind me that we are not rich. I would gladly give him ten florins, if I had them, but do not let it be less than five. He is not able to do much for himself. Pray help him in any other way you can. Think how this money can be raised. There is a silver cup that might be pawned. Sure I am that God will not desert us. Adieu."

Luther's pleasures were as simple as his domestic affections were pure. He wrote metrical versions of the Psalms, well described by Mr. Hallam, as holding a middle place between the doggerel of Sternhold and Hopkins, and the meretricious ornaments of the later versifiers of the Songs of David. He wedded to them music of his own, to which the most obtuse ear cannot listen without emotion. The greatest of the sons of Germany was, in this respect, a true child of that vocal land; for such was his enthusiasm for the art that he assigned to it a place second only to that of theology itself. He was also an ardent lover of painting, and yielded to Albert Durer the homage which he denied to Cajetan and Erasmus. His are amongst the earliest works embellished by the aid of the engraver. With the birds of his native country he had established a strict intimacy, watching, smiling, and thus moralizing over their habits. "That little fellow," he said of a bird going to roost, "has chosen his shelter, and is quietly rocking himself to sleep without a care for to-morrow's *lodging, calmly* holding by his little twig, and leaving God to think for him." The following parable, in a letter to Spalatin, is in a more ambitious strain.

"You are going to Augsburg without having taken the auspices, and ignorant when you will be allowed to begin. I, on the other hand, am in the midst of the Comitia, in the presence of illustrious sovereigns, kings, dukes, grandees, and nobles, who are solemnly debating affairs of state, and making the air ring with their deliberations and decrees. Instead of imprisoning themselves in those royal caverns which you call palaces they hold their assemblies in the sunshine, with the arch of heaven for their tent, substituting for costly tapestries the foliage of trees, where they enjoy their liberty. Instead of confining themselves in parks and pleasure-grounds, they range over the earth to its utmost limits. They detest the stupid luxuries of silk and embroidery, but all dress in the same colour, and put on very much the same looks. To say the truth, they all wear black, and all sing one tune. It is a song formed of a single note, with no variation but what is produced by the pleasing contrast of young and old voices. I have seen and heard nothing of their emperor. They have a supreme contempt for the quadruped employed by our gentry, having a much better method for setting the heaviest artillery at defiance. As far as I have been able to understand their resolutions by the aid of an interpreter, they have unanimously determined to wage war through the whole year against the wheat, oats and barley, and the best corn and fruits of every kind. There is reason to fear, that victory will attend them every where, for they are a skilful and crafty race of warriors, equally expert in collecting booty by violence and by surprise. It has afforded me great pleasure to attend their assemblies as an idle looker on. The hope I cherish of the triumphs of their valour over wheat and barley, and every other enemy, renders me the sincere and faithful friend of these *patres patriæ*, these saviours of the commonwealth. If I could serve them by a wish, I would implore their deliverance from their present ugly name of crows. This is nonsense, but there is some seriousnesss in it. It is a jest which helps me to drive away painful thoughts."

The love of fables, which Luther thus indulged at one of the most eventful eras of his life, was amongst his favourite amusements. Æsop lay on the same table with the book of Psalms, and the two translations proceeded alternately. Except the Bible, he declared that he knew no better book; and pronounced it not to be the work of any single author, but the fruit of the labours of the greatest minds in all ages. It supplied him with endless jests and allusions; as for example,—"The dog in charge of the butcher's tray, unable to defend it from the avidity of other curs, said,—Well, then, I may as well have my share of the meat, and fell-to accordingly; which is precisely what the emperor is doing with the property of the church."

Few really great men, indeed, have hazarded a larger number of jokes in the midst of a circle of note-taking associates. They have left on record the following amidst many other *memorabilia*:—"God made the priest. The devil set about an imitation, but he made the tonsure too large, and produced a monk." A cup composed of five hoops or rings of glass of different colours circulated at his table. Eisleben, an Antinomian, was of the party. Luther pledged him in the following words:—"Within the second of these rings lie the ten commandments; within the next ring the creed; then comes the paternoster; the catechism lies at the bottom." So saying, he drank it off. When Eisleben's turn came, he emptied the cup only down to the beginning of the second ring. "Ah!" said Luther, "I knew that he would stick at the commandments, and therefore would not reach the creed, the Lord's prayer, or the catechism."

It must be confessed, however, that Luther's pleasantries are less remarkable for wit or delicacy than for the union of strong sense and honest merriment. They were the careless, though not inconsiderate sport of a free-spoken man, in a circle where religion and modesty, protected by an inbred reverence, did not seek the doubtful defence of conventional outworks. But pensive thoughts were the more habitual food of his overburdened mind. Neither social enjoyments, nor the tenderness of domestic life, could ever long repel the melancholy which brooded over him. It breaks out in every part of his correspondence, and tinges all his recorded conversation. "Because," he says, "my manner is sometimes gay and joyous, many think that I am always treading on roses. God knows what is in my heart. There is nothing in this life which gives me pleasure: I am tired of it. May the Lord come quickly and take me hence. Let him come to his final judgment—I wait the blow. Let him hurl his thunders, that I may be at rest. Forty years more life! I would not purchase Paradise at such a price." Yet, with this lassitude of the world, his contemplations of death were solemn, even to sadness. "How gloriously," said his friend, Dr. Jonas, "does St. Paul speak of his own death. I cannot enter into this." "It appears to me," replied Luther, "that when meditating on that subject, even St. Paul himself could not have felt all the energy which possessed him when he wrote. I preach, write, and talk about dying, with a greater firmness than I really possess, or than others ascribe to me." In common with all men of this temperament, he was profuse in extolling the opposite disposition. "The birds," he says, "must fly over our heads, but why allow them to roost in our hair?" "Gayety and a light heart, in all virtue and decorum, are the best medicine for the young, or rather for all. I who have passed my life in dejection and gloomy thoughts, nor catch at enjoyment, come from what quarter it may, and even seek for it. Criminal pleasure, indeed, comes from Satan, but that which we find in the society of good and pious men is approved by God. Ride, hunt with your friends, amuse yourself in their company. Solitude and melancholy are poison. They are deadly to all, but, above all, to the young.

The sombre character of Luther's mind cannot be correctly understood by those who are wholly ignorant of the legendary traditions of his native land. This remark is made and illustrated by M. Henry Heine, with that curious knowledge of such lore as none but a denizen of Germany could acquire. In the mines of Mansfield, at Eisenach and Erfurth, the visible and invisible worlds were almost equally populous; and the training of youth was not merely a discipline for the future offices of life, but an initiation into mysteries as impressive, though not quite so sublime, as those of Eleusis. The unearthly inhabitants of every land are near akin to the human cultivators of the soil. The killkropff of Saxony differed from a fairy or a hamadryad as a Saxon differs from a Frenchman or a Greek; the thin essences by which these spiritual bodies are sustained being distilled according to their various national tastes, from the dews of Hymettus, the light wines of Provence, and the strong beer of Germany. At the fireside around which Luther's family drew, in his childhood, there gathered a race of imps who may be considered as the presiding genii of the turnspit and the stable; witches expert in the right use of the broomstick, but incapable of perverting it into a locomotive engine; homely in gait, coarse in feature, sordid in their habits, with canine appetites, and superhuman powers, and, for the most part, eaten up with misanthropy. When, in his twentieth year, Luther for the first time opened the Bible, and read there of spiritual agents, the inveterate enemies of our race, these *spectra* were projected on a mind over which such legends had already exercised an indestructible influence. Satan and his angels crowded upon his imagination, neither as shapeless presences casting their gloomy shadows on the soul, nor as mysterious impersonations of her foul and cruel desires, nor as warriors engaged with the powers of light and love, and holiness, in the silent motionless war of antagonist energies. Luther's devils were a set of athletic, cross-grained, ill-conditioned wretches, with vile shapes and fiendish faces; who, like the monsters of dame Ursula's kitchen, gave buffet for buffet, hate for hate, and joke for joke. His Satan was not only something less than archangel ruined, but was quite below the society of that Prince of Darkness, whom mad Tom in *Lear* declares to be a gentleman. Possessing a sensitive rather than a creative imagination, Luther transferred the visionary lore, drawn from these humble sources, to the machinery of the great epic of revelation, with but little change or embellishment; and thus contrived to reduce to the level of very vulgar prose some of the noblest conceptions of inspired poetry.

At the castle of Wartburg, his Patmos, where he dwelt the willing prisoner of his friendly sovereign, the reformer chanced to have a plate of nuts at his supper-table. How many of them he swallowed, there is, unfortunately, no Boswell to tell; yet, perhaps, not a few—for, as he slept, the nuts, animated as it would seem by the demon of the pantry, executed a sort of waltz, knocking against each other, and against the slumberer's bedstead; when, lo! the staircase became possessed by a hundred barrels rolling up and down, under the guidance, probably, of the imp of the spigot. Yet all approach to Luther's room was barred by chains and by an iron door—vain intrenchments against Satan! He arose, solemnly defied the fiend, repeated the eighth Psalm, and resigned himself to sleep. Another visit from the same fearful adversary at Nuremburg led to the opposite result. The reformer flew from his bed to seek refuge in society. Once upon a time, Carlostadt, the sacramentarian, being in the pulpit, saw a tall man enter the church, and take his seat by one of the burgesses of the town. The intruder then retired, betook himself to the preacher's house, and exhibited frightful symptoms of a disposition to break all the bones of his child. Thinking better of it, however, he left with the boy a message for Carlostadt, that he might be looked for again in three days. It is needless to add that, on the third day, there was an end of the poor preacher, and of his attacks on Luther and consubstantiation. In the cloisters at Wittemburg, Luther himself heard that peculiar noise which attests the devil's presence. It came from behind a stove, resembling, for all the world, the sound of throwing a fagot on the fire. This sound, however, is not invariable. An old priest, in the attitude of prayer, heard Satan behind him, grunting like a whole herd of swine. "Ah! ha! master devil," said the priest, "you have your deserts. There was a time when you were a beautiful angel, and there you are turned into a rascally hog." The priest's devotions proceeded without further disturbance; "for," observed Luther, "there is nothing the devil can bear so little as contempt." He once saw and even touched a killkropff or supposititious child. This was at Dessau. The deviling,—for it had no other parent than Satan himself,—was about twelve years old, and looked exactly like any other boy. But the unlucky brat could do nothing but eat. He consumed as much food as four ploughmen. When things went ill in the house, his laugh was to be heard all over it. If matters went smoothly, there was no peace for his screaming. Luther sportively asserts that he recommended the elector to have this scapegrace thrown into the Moldau, as it was a mere lump of flesh without a soul. His visions sometimes assumed a deeper significance, if not a loftier aspect. In the year 1496, a frightful monster was discovered in the Tiber. It had the head of an ass, an emblem of the pope; for the church being a spiritual body incapable of a head, the pope, who had audaciously assumed that character, was fitly represented under this asinine figure. The right hand resembled an elephant's foot, typifying the papal tyranny over the weak and timid. The right foot was like an ox's hoof shadowing forth the spiritual oppression exercised by doctors, confessors, nuns, monks, and scholastic theologians; while the left foot armed with griffin's claws, could mean nothing else than the various ministers of the pope's civil authority. How far Luther believed in the existence of the monster, whose mysterious significations he thus interprets, it would not be easy to decide. Yet it is difficult to read his exposition, and to suppose it a mere pleasantry. So constantly was he haunted with this midnight crew of devils, as to have raised a serious doubt of his sanity, which even Mr. Hallam does not entirely discountenance. Yet the hypothesis is surely gratuitous. Intense study deranging the digestive organs of a man, whose bodily constitution required vigorous exercise, and whose mind had been early stored with such dreams as we have mentioned, sufficiently explains the restless importunity of the goblins amongst whom he lived. It is easier for a man to be in advance of his age on any other subject than this. It may be doubted whether the nerves of Seneca or Pliny would have been equal to a solitary evening walk by the Lake Avernus. What wonder, then, if Martin Luther was convinced that suicides fall not by their own hands, but by those of diabolical emissaries, who really adjust the cord or point the knife—that particular spots, as, for example, the pool near the summit of the Mons Pilatus, were desecrated to Satan—that the wailings of his victims are to be heard in the howlings of the night wind—or that the throwing a stone into a pond in his own neighbourhood, immediately provoked such struggles of the evil spirit imprisoned below the water, as shook the neighbouring country like an earthquake?

The mental *phantasmagoria* of so illustrious a man are an exhibition to which no one who reveres his name would needlessly direct an unfriendly, or an idle gaze. But the infirmities of our nature often afford the best measure of its strength. To estimate the strength by which temptation is overcome, you must ascertain the force of the propensities to which it is addressed. Amongst the elements of Luther's character was an awe verging towards idolatry, for all things, whether in the works of God or in the institutions of man, which can be regarded as depositories of the Divine power, or as delegates of the Divine authority. From pantheism, the disease of imaginations at once devout and unhallowed, he was preserved in youth by his respect for the doctrines of the church; and, in later life, by his absolute surrender of his own judgment to the text of the sacred canon. But as far as a pantheistic habit of thought and feeling can consist with the most unqualified belief in the uncommunicable unity of the Divine nature, such thoughts and feelings were habitual to him. The same spirit which solemnly acknowledged the existence, whilst it abhorred the use, of the high faculties, which, according to the popular faith, the foul fiends of earth, and air, and water, at once enjoy and pervert, contemplated with almost prostrate reverence the majesty and the hereditary glories of Rome; and the apostolical succession of her pontiff, with kings and emperors of his tributaries, the Catholic hierarchy as his vicegerents, and the human mind his universal empire. To brave the vengeance of such a dynasty, wielding the mysterious keys which close the gates of hell and open the portals of heaven, long appeared to Luther an impious audacity, of which nothing less than wo, eternal and unutterable, would be the sure and appropriate penalty

For a man of his temperament to hush these superstitious terrors, and to abjure the golden idol to which the adoring eyes of all nations, kindred, and languages were directed, was a self-conquest, such as none but the most heroic minds can achieve; and to which even they are unequal, unless sustained by an invisible but omnipotent arm. For no error can be more extravagant than that which would reduce Martin Luther to the rank of a coarse spiritual demagogue. The deep self-distrust which, for ten successive years, postponed his irreconcilable war with Rome, clung to him to the last; nor was he ever unconscious of the dazzling splendour of the pageantry which his own hand had contributed so largely to overthrow. There is no alloy of affectation in the following avowal, taken from one of his letters to Erasmus:

"You must, indeed, feel yourself in some measure awed in the presence of a succession of learned men, and by the consent of so many ages, during which flourished scholars so conversant in sacred literature, and martyrs illustrious by so many miracles. To all this must be added the more modern theologians, universities, bishops, and popes. On their side are arrayed learning, genius, numbers, dignity, station, power, sanctity, miracles, and what not. On mine, Wycliff and Laurentius Valla, and though you forget to mention him, Augustine also. Then comes Luther, a mean man, born but yesterday, supported only by a few friends, who have neither learning, nor genius, nor greatness, nor sanctity, nor miracles. Put them altogether, and they have not wit enough to cure a spavined horse. What are they? What the wolf said of the nightingale—a voice, and nothing else. I confess it is with reason you pause in such a presence as this. For ten years together I hesitated myself. Could I believe that this Troy, which had triumphed over so many assaults would fall at last? I call God to witness, that I should have persisted in my fears, and should have hesitated until now, if truth had not compelled me to speak. You may well believe that my heart is not rock; and, if it were, yet so many are the waves and storms which have been beaten upon it, that it must have yielded when the whole weight of this authority came thundering on my head, like a deluge ready to overwhelm me."

The same feelings were expressed at a later time in the following words:

"I daily perceive how difficult it is to overcome long cherished scruples. Oh, what pain it has cost me, though the Scripture is on my side, to defend myself to my own heart for having dared singly to resist the pope, and to denounce him as antichrist! What have been the afflictions of my bosom! How often, in the bitterness of my soul, have I pressed myself with the papist's argument,—Art thou alone wise? are all others in error? have they been mistaken for so long a time? What if you are yourself mistaken, and are dragging with you so many souls into eternal condemnation? Thus did I reason with myself, till Jesus Christ, by his own infallible word, tranquillized my heart, and sustained it against this argument, as a reef of rocks thrown up against the waves laughs at all their fury."

He who thus acknowledged the influence, while he defied the despotism of human authority, was self-annihilated in the presence of his Maker. "I have learned," he says, "from the Holy Scriptures that it is a perilous and a fearful thing to speak in the house of God; to address those who will appear in judgment against us, when at the last day we shall be found in his presence; when the gaze of the angels shall be directed to us, when every creature shall behold the divine Word, and shall listen till He speaks. Truly, when I think of this, I have no wish but to be silent, and to cancel all that I have written. It is a fearful thing to be called to render to God an account of every idle word." Philip Melancthon occasionally endeavoured, by affectionate applause, to sustain and encourage the mind which was thus bowed down under the sense of unworthiness. But the praise, even of the chosen friend of his bosom, found no echo there. He rejected it, kindly indeed, but with a rebuke so earnest and passionate, as to show that the commendations of him whom he loved, and valued most, were unwelcome. They served but to deepen the depressing consciousness of ill desert, inseparable from his lofty conceptions of the duties which had been assigned to him. In Luther, as in other men, the stern and heroic virtues demanded for their support that profound lowliness which might at first appear the most opposed to their development. The eye which often turns inward with self-complacency, or habitually looks round for admiration, is never long or steadfastly fixed on any more elevated object. It is permitted to no man at once to court the applauses of the world, and to challenge a place amongst the generous and devoted benefactors of his species. The enervating spell of vanity, so fatal to many a noble intellect, exercised no perceptible control over Martin Luther. Though conscious of the rare endowments he had received from Providence (of which that very consciousness was not the least important) the secret of his strength lay in the heartfelt persuasion, that his superiority to other men gave him no title to their commendations, and in his abiding sense of the little value of such praises. The growth of his social affections was impeded by self-regarding thoughts; and he could endure the frowns and even the coldness of those whose approving smiles he judged himself unworthy to receive, and did not much care to win. His was not that feeble benevolence which leans for support, or depends for existence, on the sympathy of those for whom it labours. Reproofs, sharp, unsparing, and pitiless, were familiar to his tongue, and to his pen. Such a censure he had directed to the archbishop of Mentz, which Spalatin, in the name of their common friend and sovereign, the elector Frederic, implored him to suppress. "No," replied Luther, "in defence of the fold of Christ, I will oppose to the utmost of my power, this ravening wolf, as I have resisted others. I send you my book, which was ready before your letter reached me. It has not induced me to alter a word. The question is decided, I cannot heed your objections." They were such, however, as most men would have thought reasonable enough. Here are some of the words of which neither friend nor sovereign could dissuade the publication. "Did you imagine that Luther was dead? Believe it not. He lives under the protection of that God who has already humbled the pope, and is ready to begin with the archbishop of Mentz a game for which few are prepared." To the severe admonition which followed, the princely prelate answered in his own person, in terms of the most humble deference, leaving to Capito, his minister, the ticklish office of remonstrating against the rigour with which the lash had been applied. But neither soothing nor menaces could abate Luther's confidence in his cause, and in himself. "Christianity," he replies, "is open and honest. It sees things as they are, and proclaims them as they are. I am for tearing off every mask, for managing nothing, for extenuating nothing, for shutting the eyes to nothing, that truth may be transparent and unadulterated, and may have a free course. Think you that Luther is a man who is content to shut his eyes if you can but lull him by a few cajoleries?" "Expect every thing from my affections; but reverence, nay tremble for the faith." George, duke of Saxony, the near kinsman of Frederic, and one of the most determined enemies of the Reformation, not seldom provoked and encountered the same resolute defiance. "Should God call me to Wittemburg, I would go there, though it should rain Duke Georges for nine days together, and each new duke should be nine times more furious than this." "Though exposed daily to death in the midst of my enemies, and without any human resource, I never in my life despised any thing so heartily as these stupid threats of Duke George, and his associates in folly. I write in the morning fasting, with my heart filled with holy confidence. Christ lives and reigns, and I, too, shall live and reign."

Here is a more comprehensive denunciation of the futility of the attempts made to arrest his course.

"To the language of the fathers, of men, of angels, and of devils, I oppose neither antiquity nor numbers, but the single word of the Eternal Majesty, even that gospel which they are themselves compelled to acknowledge. Here is my hold, my stand, my resting-place, my glory, and my triumph. Hence I assault popes, Thomists, Henrycists, sophists, and all the gates of hell. I little heed the words of men, whatever may have been their sanctity, nor am I anxious about tradition or doubtful customs. The word of God is above all. If the Divine Majesty be on my side, what care I for the rest, though a thousand Augustines, and a thousand Cyprians, and a thousand such churches as those of Henry, should rise against me? God can neither err nor deceive. Augustine, Cyprian, and all the saints, can err, and have erred."

"At Leipsic, at Augsburg, and at Worms, my spirit was as free as a flower of the field." "He whom God moves to speak, expresses himself openly and freely, careless whether he is alone, or has others at his side. So spake Jeremiah, and I may boast of having done the same. God has not for the last thousand years bestowed on any bishop such great gifts as on me, and it is right that I should extol his gifts. Truly, I am indignant with myself that I do not heartily rejoice and give thanks. Now and then I raise a faint hymn of thanksgiving, and feebly praise Him. Well! live or die, *Domini sumus*. You may take the word either in the genitive or in the nominative case. Therefore, Sir Doctor, be firm."

This buoyant spirit sometimes expressed itself in a more pithy phrase. When he first wrote against indulgences, Dr. Jerome Schurf said to him, "What are you about? they won't allow it." "What if they *must* allow it?" was the peremptory answer.

The preceding passages, while they illustrate his indestructible confidence in himself as the minister, and in his cause as the behest of Heaven, are redolent of that unseemly violence and asperity which are attested at once by the regrets of his friends, and the reproaches of his enemies, and his own acknowledgments. So fierce, indeed, and contumelious and withering is his invective, as to suggest the theory, that, in her successive transmigrations, the same fiery soul which in one age breathed the "Divine Philippics," and in another, the "Letters on a Regicide Peace," was lodged in the sixteenth century under the cowl of an Augustinian monk; retaining her indomitable energy of abuse, though condemned to a temporary divorce from her inspiring genius. Yet what she lost in eloquence in her transit from the Roman to the Irishman, this upbraiding spirit more than retrieved in generous and philanthropic ardour, while she dwelt in the bosom of the Saxon. Luther's rage, for it is nothing less—his scurrilities, for they are no better—are at least the genuine language of passion, excited by a deep abhorrence of imposture, tyranny, and wrong. Through the ebullitions of his wrath may be discovered his lofty self-esteem, but not a single movement of puerile vanity; his cordial scorn for fools and their folly, but not one heartless sarcasm; his burning indignation against oppressors, whether spiritual or secular, unclouded by so much as a passing shade of malignity. The torrent of emotion is headlong, but never turbulent. When we are least able to sympathize with his irascible feelings, it is also least in our power to refuse our admiration to a mind which, when thus torn up to its lowest depths, discloses no trace of envy, selfishness, or revenge, or of any still baser inmate. His mission from on high may be disputed, but hardly his own belief in it. In that persuasion, his thoughts often reverted to the prophet of Israel mocking the idolatrous priests of Baal, and menacing their still more guilty king; and if the mantle of Elijah might have been borne with a more imposing majesty, it could not have fallen on one better prepared to pour contempt on the proudest enemies of truth, or to brave their utmost resentment.

Is it paradoxical to ascribe Luther's boisterous invective to his inherent reverence for all those persons and institutions, in favour of which wisdom, power, and rightful dominion, are involuntarily presumed? He lived under the control of an imagination susceptible though not creative—of that passive mental sense to which it belongs to embrace, rather than to originate—to fix and deepen our more serious impressions, rather than to minister to the understanding in the search or the embellishment of truth. This propensity, the basis of religion itself in some, of loyalty in others, and of superstition perhaps in all, prepares the feeble for a willing servitude; and furnishes despotism with zealous instruments in men of stronger nerves and stouter hearts. It steeled Dominic and Loyola for their relentless tasks, and might have raised St. Martin of Wittemburg to the honours of canonization; if, in designing him for his arduous office, Providence had not controlled the undue sensibility of Luther's mind, by imparting to him a brother's love for all the humbler members of the family of man, and a filial fear of God, stronger even than his reverence for the powers and principalities of this sublunary world. Between his religious affections and his homage for the idols of his imagination, he was agitated by a ceaseless conflict. The nice adjustment of such a balance ill suited his impatient and irritable temper; and he assaulted the objects of his early respect with an impetuosity which betrays his secret dread of those formidable antagonists (so he esteemed them) of God and of mankind. He could not trust himself to be moderate. The restraints of education, habit, and natural disposition, could be overborne only by the excitement which he courted and indulged. His long-cherished veneration for those who tread upon the high places of the earth, lent to his warfare with them all the energy of self-denial, quickened by the anxiety of self-distrust! He scourged his lordly adversaries, in the spirit of a flagellant taming his own rebellious flesh. His youthful devotion for "the solemn plausibilities of life," like all other affections obstinately repelled and mortified, reversed its original tendency, and gave redoubled fervour to the zeal with which he denounced their vanity and resisted their usurpation. If these indignant contumelies offended the gentle, the learned, and the wise, they sustained the courage and won the confidence of the multitude. The voice which commands in a tempest must battle with the roar of the elements. In his own apprehension at least, Luther's soul was among lions—the princes of Germany, and their ministers; Henry the Eighth, and Edward Lee, his chaplain; the sacramentarians and Anabaptists; the Universities of Cologne and Louvain; Charles and Leo; Adrian and Clement; Papists, Jurists, and Aristotelians; and, above all, the devils whom his creed assigned to each of these formidable opponents as so many inspiring or ministering spirits. However fierce and indefensible may be his occasional style, history presents no more sublime picture than that of the humble monk triumphing over such adversaries, in the invincible power of a faith before which the present and the visible disappeared, to make way for things unseen, eternal, and remote. One brave spirit encountered and subdued a hostile world. An intellect of no gigantic proportions, seconded by learning of no marvellous compass, and gifted with no rare or exquisite abilities, but invincible in decision and constancy of purpose, advanced to the accomplishment of one great design, with a continually increasing *momentum*, before which all feebler minds retired, and all opposition was dissipated. The majesty of the contest, and the splendour of the results, may, perhaps, even in our fastidious and delicate age be received as an apology for such reproofs as the following to the royal "Defender of the Faith."

"There is much royal ignorance in this volume, but there is also much virulence and falsehood, which belongs to Lee the editor. In the cause of Christ I have trampled under foot the idol of the Roman abomination which had usurped the place of God and the dominion of sovereigns and of the world. Who, then, is this Henry, this Thomist, this disciple of the monster, that I should dread his blasphemies and his fury? Truly he is the defender of the Church! Yes, of that Church of his which he thus extols—of that prostitute who is clothed in purple, drunk with her debaucheries—of that mother of fornications. Christ is my leader. I will strike with the same blow that Church and the defender with whom she has formed this strict union. They have challenged me to war Well, they shall have war. They have scorned the peace I offered them. Well, they shall have no more peace. It shall be seen which will first be weary—the pope or Luther."—"The world is gone mad. There are the Hungarians, assuming the character of the defenders of God himself. They pray in their litanies, *ut nos defensores tuos exaudire digneris*—why do not some of our princes take on them the protection of Jesus Christ, others that of the Holy Spirit? Then, indeed, the Divine Trinity would be well guarded."

The briefs of Pope Adrian are thus disposed of:—"It is mortifying to be obliged to give such good German in answer to this wretched Latin. But it is the pleasure of God to confound antichrist in every thing—to leave him neither literature nor language. They say that he has gone mad and fallen into dotage. It is a shame to address us Germans in such Latin as this, and to send to sensible people such a clumsy and absurd interpretation of scripture."

The bulls of Pope Clement fare no better. "The pope tells us in his answer that he is willing to throw open the golden doors. It is long since we opened all doors in Germany. But these Italian scaramouches have never restored a farthing of the gain they have made by their indulgences, dispensations, and other diabolical inventions. Good Pope Clement, all your clemency and gentleness won't pass here. We'll buy no more indulgences. Golden doors and bulls, get ye home again. Look to the Italians for payment. They who know ye will buy ye no more. Thanks be to God, we know that they who possess and believe the gospel, enjoy an uninterrupted jubilee. Ex cellent pope, what care we for your bulls? You may save your seals and your parchment. They are in bad odour now-a-days."—"Let them accuse me of too much violence. I care not. Hereafter be it my glory that men shall tell how I inveighed and raged against the papists. For the last ten years have I been humbling myself, and addressing them in none but respectful language. What has been the consequence of all this submission? To make bad worse. These people are but the more furious. Well, since they are incorrigible, as it is vain to hope to shake their infernal purposes by kindness, I will break them, I will pursue them," &c.—"Such is my contempt for these satans, that were I not confined here, I would go straight to Rome, in spite of the devil and all these furies." "But," he continues, in a more playful mood, "I must have patience with the pope, with my boarders, my servants, with Catherine de Bora, and with every body else. In short, I live a life of patience."

At the risk of unduly multiplying these quotations, we must add another, which has been quoted triumphantly by his enemies. It is his answer to the charge of mistranslating the Bible. "The ears of the papists are too long with their hi! ha!—they are unable to criticise a translation from Latin into German. Tell them that Dr. Martin Luther chooses that it shall be so, and that a papist and a jackass are the same."

We should reprint no small portion of Luther's works before we exhausted the examples which might be drawn from them, of the uproar with which he assailed his antagonists. To the reproaches which this violence drew on him, he rarely condescended to reply. But to his best and most powerful friend, the Elector Frederic, he makes a defence, in which there is some truth and more eloquence. "They say that these books of mine are too keen and cutting. They are right: I never meant them to be soft and gentle. My only regret is, that they cut no deeper. Think of the violence of my enemies, and you must confess that I have been forbearing."—"All the world exclaims against me, vociferating the most hateful calumnies; and if in my turn, I, poor man, raise my voice, then nobody has been vehement but Luther. In fine, whatever I do or say must be wrong, even should I raise the dead. Whatever they do must be right, even should they deluge Germany with tears and blood." In his more familiar discourse, he gave another, and perhaps a more accurate account of the real motives of his impetuosity. He purposely fanned the flame of an indignation which he thought virtuous, because the origin of it was so. "I never," he said, "write or speak so well as when I am in a passion." He found anger an ineffectual, and at last a necessary stimulant, and indulged in a liberal or rather in an intemperate use of it.

The tempestuous phase of Luther's mind was not, however, permanent. The wane of it may be traced in his later writings; and the cause of it may be readily assigned. The liberator of the human mind was soon to discover that the powers he had set free were not subject to his control. The Iconoclasts, Anabaptists, and other innovators, however welcome at first as useful, though irregular partisans, brought an early discredit on the victory to which they had contributed. The reformer's suspicion of these doubtful allies was first awakened by the facility with which they urged their conquests over the established opinions of the Christian world beyond the limits at which he had himself paused. He distrusted their exemption from the pangs and throes with which the birth of his own doctrines had been accompanied. He perceived in them none of the caution, self-distrust, and humility, which he wisely judged inseparable from the honest pursuit of truth. Their claims to an immediate intercourse with heaven appeared to him an impious pretension; for he judged that it is only as attempered through many a gross intervening medium, that divine light can be received into the human understanding. Carlostadt, one of the professors of Wittemburg, was the leader of the Illuminati at that university. The influence of Luther procured his expulsion to Jena, where he established a printing press. But the maxims of toleration are not taught in the school of successful polemics; and the secular arm was invoked to silence an appeal to the world at large against a new papal authority.

The debate from which Luther thus excluded others he could not deny to himself; for he shrunk from no inquiry and dreaded no man's prowess. A controversial passage at arms accordingly took place between the reformer and his refractory pupil. It is needless to add that they separated, each more firmly convinced of the errors of his opponent. The taunt of fearing an open encounter with truth, Luther repelled with indignation and spirit. He invited Carlostadt to publish freely whatever he thought fit, and the challenge being accepted, placed in his hands a florin, as a kind of wager of battle. It was received with equal frankness. The combatants grasped each other's hands, drank mutual pledges in a solemn cup, and parted to engage in hostilities more serious than such greetings might have seemed to augur. Luther had the spirit of a martyr, and was not quite exempt from that of a persecutor. Driven from one city to another, Carlostadt at last found refuge at Basle; and thence assailed his adversary with a rapid succession of pamphlets, and with such pleasant appellatives as "twofold papist," "ally of antichrist," and so forth. They were answered with equal fertility, and with no greater moderation. "The devil," says Luther, "held his tongue till I won him over with a florin. It was money well laid out. I do not regret it." He now advocated the cause of social order, and exposed the dangers of ignorant innovators, assailing these new enemies with his own weapons. "It will never do to jest with Mr. All-the-World (*Herr Omnes.*) To keep that formidable person quiet, God has established lawful authority. It is his pleasure that there should be order amongst us here." "They cry out, the Bible! the Bible!—Bibel! Bubel! Babel!" From that sacred source many arguments had been drawn to prove that all good Christians, were bound, in imitation of the great Jewish lawgiver, to overthrow and deface the statues with which the papists had embellished the sacred edifices. Luther strenuously resisted both the opinion and the practice; maintaining that the Scriptures nowhere prohibit the use of images, except such as were designated as a representation or symbol of Deity. But to the war with objects designed (however injudiciously) to aid the imagination, and to enliven the affections, Carlostadt and his partisans united that mysticism which teaches that the mind, thus deprived of all external and sensible supports, should raise itself to a height of spiritual contemplation and repose, where, all other objects being banished, and all other sounds unheard, and all other thoughts expelled, the Divine Being will directly manifest himself, and disclose his will by a voice silent and inarticulate, and yet distinctly intelligible. Luther handles this sublime nonsense as it well deserved. "The devil," he says, (for this is his universal solvent,) "opens his large mouth, and roars out, Spirit! spirit! spirit! destroying the while all roads, bridges, scaling-ladders, and paths, by which spirit can enter; namely, the visible order established by God in holy baptism, in outward forms, and in his own word. They would have you mount the clouds and ride the winds, telling you neither how, nor when, nor where, nor which. All this they leave you to discover for yourself."

Carlostadt was an image-breaker and a mystic, but he was something more. He had adopted the opinion of Zuingle and Œcolampadius on the holy communion,—receiving as an emblem, and as nothing else, the sacred elements in which the Roman Catholic Church, after the words of consecration, recognises the very body and blood of the Divine Redeemer. He was, therefore, supported by the whole body of Swiss reformers. Luther, "chained down," as he expresses it, "by the sacred text," to the doctrine of the real presence, had ardently desired to be enfranchised from this opinion. "As often as he felt within himself the strivings of the old Adam, he was but too violently drawn to adopt the Swiss interpretation." "But if we take counsel with reason we shall no longer believe any mystery." He had, however, consulted this dangerous guide too long, thus easily to shake off her company. The text taught him one real presence, his reason assured him of another; and so he required his disciples to admit and believe both. They obeyed, though at the expense of a schism among the reformers, of which it is difficult to say whether it occasioned more distress to themselves, or more exultation to their common enemies.

This is the first and greatest of those "Variations" of which the history has been written with such inimitable eloquence. Nothing short of the most obtuse prejudice could deny to Bossuet the praise of having brought to religious controversy every quality which can render it either formidable or attractive; a style of such transparent perspicuity as would impart delight to the study of the year-books, if they could be rewritten in it; a sagacity which nothing escapes; and a fervour of thought and feeling so intense, as to breathe and burn not only without the use of vehement or opprobrious words, but through a diction invariably calm and simple; and a mass of learning so vast and so perfectly digested as to be visible every where without producing the slightest encumbrance or embarrassment. To quote from Mr. Hallam's History of the Middle Ages:—"Nothing, perhaps, in polemical eloquence is so splendid as the chapter on Luther's theological tenets. The eagle of Meaux is there truly seen, lordly of form, fierce of eyes, terrible in his beak and claws"—a graphic and not unmerited tribute to the prowess of this formidable adversary. But the triumph which it appears to concede to him may not be so readily acknowledged.

The argument of the "Variations" rests on the postulate, that a religion of divine origin must have provided some resource for excluding uncertainty on every debatable point of belief or practice. But it must be vain to search for this steadfast light amongst those who were at variance on so many vital questions. The required *Ductor Dubitantium* could, therefore, be found only in the venerable form of the Catholic Church, whose oracles, every where accessible and never silent, had, from age to age, delivered to the faithful the same invariable truths in one continuous strain of perfect and unbroken harmony.

Much as the real contrast has been exaggerated by the most subtle disputant of modern times, it would be futile to deny, or to extenuate the glaring inconsistencies of the reformers with each other, and with themselves. Protestantism may well endure an avowal which leaves her foundations unimpaired. Bossuet has disproved the existence of a miracle which no man alleges. He has incontrovertibly established that the laws of nature were not suspended in favour of Luther and his associates. He has shown, with inimitable address and eloquence, that, within the precincts of moral science, human reason must toil in vain for demonstrative certainties; and that, in such studies, they who would adopt the same general results, and co-operate for one common end, must be content to rest very far short of an absolute identity of opinion. But there is a deep and impassable gulf between these premises and the inference deduced from them. The stupendous miracle of a traditional unanimity for fifteen hundred years amongst the members of the Christian Church, at once unattested by any authentic evidence, and refuted by irresistible proofs, is opposed as much to the whole economy of the moral government of the world, as it is to human experience. It was, indeed, easy to silence dissent by terror; to disguise real differences beneath conventional symbols; to divert the attention of the incurious by a gorgeous pageantry; and to disarm the inquisitive at one time by golden preferments, and at another by specious compromises: and it was easy to allege this timid, or blind, or selfish acquiescence in spiritual despotism, as a general consent to the authority, and as a spontaneous adoption of the tenets of the dominant priesthood. But so soon as men really begin to think, it was impossible that they should think alike. When suffrages were demanded, and not acclamations, there was at once an end of unanimity. With mental freedom came doubt, and debate, and sharp dissension. The indispensable conditions of human improvement were now to be fulfilled. It was discovered that religious knowledge, like all other knowledge, and religious agreement, like all other agreement, were blessings which, like all other blessings, must be purchased at a price. Luther dispelled the illusion that man's noblest science may be attained, his first interests secured, and his most sacred duties discharged, except in the strenuous exercise of the best faculties of his nature. He was early taught that they who submit themselves to this divine ordinance are cut off from the intellectual repose which rewards a prostrate submission to human authority; that they must conduct the search of truth through many a bitter disappointment, and many a humiliating retraction, and many a weary strife; and that they must brace their nerves and strain their mental powers to the task, with sleepless diligence,—attended and sustained the while by singleness of purpose, by candour, by hope, by humility, and by devotion. When this severe lesson had been learned, the reformers boldly, nay, passionately, avowed their mutual differences. The imperfect vision, and unsteady gait, of eyes long excluded from the light, and limbs debarred from exercise, drew on them the taunts and contumelies of those whose bondage they had dared to reject. But the sarcasms even of Erasmus, the eloquence even of Bossuet, were hurled at them in vain. Centuries rolled on their appointed course of controversy, of prejudice, of persecution, and of long suffering. Nor was that sharp conflict endured to no good end. Gradually the religion of the gospel resumed much of the benignant and catholic spirit of the primitive ages. The rights of conscience and the principles of toleration, were acknowledged. Some vehement disputes were consigned to well-merited neglect. The Church of Rome herself silently adopted much of the spirit, whilst anathematizing the tenets, of the reformers; and if the dominion of peace and charity be still imperfect and precarious, yet there is a brighter prospect of their universal empire than has ever before dawned on the nations of Christendom. The eagle of Meaux, had he been reserved for the nineteenth century, would have laid aside "the terrors of his beak, the lightnings of his eye," and would have winged his lordly flight to regions elevated far above those over which it is his glory to have spread war and consternation.

These, however, are conclusions, which, in Luther's age, were beyond the reach of human foresight. It was at that time supposed that all men might at once freely discuss, and unanimously interpret, the meaning of the inspired volume. The trial of the experiment brought to light many essential variations, but still more in which the verbal exceeded the real difference; and such was, perhaps, the case with the sacramentarian controversy. The objection to Luther's doctrine of consubstantiation, was not that it was opposed to the reason of man, nor even that it was contradicted by the evidence of his senses; but that no intelligible meaning could be assigned to any of the combinations of words in which it was expressed. It might be no difficult task to be persuaded that whatever so great a doctor taught, on so high a point of theology, must be a truth;—just as the believers in George Psalmanazer may have been firmly assured of the verity of the statements he addressed to them in the language of Formosa. But the Lutheran doctrine could hardly have been more obscure, if delivered in the Formosan, instead of the Latin or the German tongue. To all common apprehension, it appeared nothing less than the simultaneous affirmation and denial of the very same thing. In this respect, it closely resembled the kindred doctrine of the Church of Rome. Yet who would dare to avow such presumptuous bigotry as to impute to the long unbroken succession of powerful and astute minds which have adorned the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches, the extravagance of having substituted unmeaning sounds for a definite sense, on so momentous an article of their respective creeds? The consequence may be avoided by a much more rational supposition. It is, that the learned of both communions used the words in which that article is enounced, in a sense widely remote from that which they usually bear. The proof of this hypothesis would be more easy than attractive; nor would it be a difficult, though an equally uninviting office, to show that Zuingle and his followers indulged themselves in a corresponding freedom with human language. The dispute, however, proceeded too rapidly to be overtaken or arrested by definitions; which, had they preceded, instead of following the controversy, might have stifled in its birth many a goodly folio.

The minds of men are rudely called away from these subtleties. Throughout the west of Germany, the peasants rose in a sudden and desperate revolt against their lords, under the guidance of Goetz of the "Iron Hand." If neither animated by the principles, nor guided by the precepts, of the gospel, the insurgents at least avowed their adherence to the party then called Evangelical, and justified their conduct by an appeal to the doctrines of the reformers. Yet this fearful disruption of the bands of society was provoked neither by speculative opinions, nor by imaginary wrongs. The grievances of the people were galling, palpable, and severe. They belonged to that class of social evils over which the advancing light of truth and knowledge must always triumph; either by prompting timely concessions, or by provoking the rebound of the overstrained patience of mankind. Domestic slavery, feudal tenures, oppressive taxation, and a systematic denial of justice to the poor, occupied the first place in their catalogue of injuries: the forest laws and the exaction of small tithes the second. The demand of the right to choose their own religious teachers, may not improbably have been added, to give to their cause the semblance of a less sublunary character; and rather in compliment to the spirit of the times, than from any very lively desire for instructers, who, they well knew, would discourage and rebuke their lawless violence. Such a monitor was Luther. He was at once too conspicuous and too ardent to remain a passive spectator of these tumults. The nobles arraigned him as the author of their calamities. The people invoked him as an arbiter in the dispute. He answered their appeal with more than papal dignity. A poor untitled priest asserted over the national mind of Germany, a command more absolute than that of her thousand princes and their imperial head. He had little of the science of government, nor, in truth, of any other science. But his mind had been expanded by his studies which give wisdom even to the simple. His understanding was invigorated by habitual converse with the inspired writings, and his soul drank deeply of their spirit. And therefore it was, that from him Europe first heard those great social maxims which, though they now pass for elementary truths, were then as strange in theory as they were unknown in practice. He fearlessly maintained that the demands of the insurgents were just. He asserted the all important, though obvious truth, that power is confided to the rulers of mankind not to gratify their caprice or selfishness, but as a sacred trust to be employed for the common good of society at large; and he denounced their injustice and rapacity with the same stern vehemence which he had formerly directed against the spiritual tyrants of the world. For, in common with all who have caught the genius as well as the creed of Christianity, his readiest sympathies were with the poor, the destitute, and the oppressed; and, in contemplating the unequal distribution of the good things of life, he was not slowly roused to a generous indignation against those to whom the advantages of fortune had taught neither pity nor forbearance. But it was an emotion restrained and directed by far deeper thoughts than visit the minds of sentimental patriots, or selfish demagogues. He depicted, in his own ardent and homely phrase, the guilt, the folly, and the miseries of civil war. He reminded the people of their ignorance and their faults. He bade them not to divert their attention from these, to scan the errors of their superiors. He drew from the evangelical precepts of patience, meekness, and long-suffering, every motive which could calm their agitated passions. He implored them not to dishonour the religion they professed; and showed that subordination in human society was a divine ordinance, designed to promote, in different ways, the moral improvement of every rank, and the general happiness of all.

The authority, the courage, and the pathetic earnestness of the great reformer were exerted in vain. Oppression, which drives wise men mad, had closed the ears of the German peasantry to the advice even of Martin Luther; and they plunged into a contest more desperate in its character, and more fatal in its results, than any which stains the annals of the empire. He felt, with the utmost keenness, the reproach thus brought unto the Reformation; nor may it be concealed, that at last his voice was raised in terrible indignation against the insurgents by whom his pacific efforts had been defeated and his remonstrances despised. His old antagonist, Carlostadt, was charged with a guilty participation in the revolt; and in his distress appealed to the much-reviled consubstantialist for protection. It was hardly in human nature, certainly not in Luther's, to reject such a supplicant. The *odium theologicum* is, after all, rather a vituperative than a malignant affection, even its worst type; and Luther possessed, more than most polemics, the faculty of exorcising the demon of wrath through the channel of the pen. He placed Carlostadt in safety, defended him from the charge of fostering rebellion, and demanded for him a fair trial and a patient hearing. His preternatural fate has been already noticed.

But a more formidable enemy was at hand. The supremacy of Erasmus in the world of letters was such as no other writer ever lived to enjoy. Literature had then a universal language, and the learned of all nations acknowledged him as their guide and model. In an age of intense mental activity, no other mind was so impatient of repose; at a period when freedom of thought was asserted with all the enthusiasm of new-born hope, he emulated the most sanguine of the insurgents against the ancient dynasties. The restorer, almost the inventor, of the popular interpretation of the Scriptures, he was excelled by few, if any, in the more ambitious science of biblical criticism. His philosophy (if in deference to custom it must so be called) was but the application to those inquiries in which the present and future welfare of mankind is chiefly involved, of an admirable good sense—penetrating sophisms under the most specious disguise, and repelling mere verbal subtleties, however imposing their pretensions, or however illustrious their patrons. Alternately a man of the world, and a recluse scholar, he was ever wide awake to the real business of life; even in those studies which usually conduct the mere prisoners of the cloister into dreamy and transcendental speculations. In his hands, the Latin language was bent to uses of which Cicero himself might have thought it incapable; and without any barbarous innovations, became, almost for the first time, the vehicle of playful banter, and of high and mysterious doctrines, treated in a familiar and easy tone. Of the two imperial virtues, industry and self-denial, the literary character of Erasmus was adorned by the first, much more than by the second. Grasping at universal excellence and immediate renown, he poured out orations, verses, essays, dialogues, aphorisms, biographies, translations, and new editions of the classical writers, with a rapidity which at once dazzled the world, and exhausted himself. Deeply as the impress of his mind was fastened on his own generation, those only of his countless works retain their charm in later times, which he regarded but as the pastime of a few leisure hours. Every one has read the "Colloquies," and admired their gay and graceful exposure of the frauds and credulity of his age. The "Praise of Folly" should never be separated from Holbein's etchings, without which the reader may now and then smile, but hardly laugh. The "Ciceronians" is one of those elaborate pleasantries which give pleasure only to the laborious. For neither as a wit nor as a theologian, nor perhaps even as a critic, does Erasmus rank among master intellects; and in the other departments of literature no one has ventured to claim for him a very elevated station. His real glory is to have opened at once new channels of popular and of abstruse knowledge—to have guided the few, while he instructed the many—to have lived and written for noble ends—to have been surpassed by none in the compass of his learning, or the collective value of his works—and to have prepared the way for a mighty revolution, which it required moral qualities far loftier than his to accomplish. For the soul of this great man did not partake of the energy of his intellectual faculties. He repeatedly confesses that he had none of the spirit of a martyr; and the acknowledgment is made in the tone of sarcasm, rather than in that of regret. He belonged to that class of actors on the scene of life, who have always appeared as the harbingers of great social changes;—men gifted with the power to discern, and the hardihood to proclaim, truths of which they want the courage to encounter the infallible results; who outrun their generation in thought, but lag behind it in action; players at the sport of reform so long as reform itself appears at an indefinite distance; more ostentatious of their mental superiority, than anxious for the well-being of mankind; dreaming that the dark page of history may hereafter become a fairy tale, in which enchantment will bring to pass a glorious catastrophe, unbought by intervening strife, and agony, and suffering; and therefore overwhelmed with alarm when the edifice begins to totter, of which their own hands have sapped the foundation. He was a reformer until the Reformation became a fearful reality; a jester at the bulwarks of the papacy until they began to give way; a propagator of the Scriptures, until men betook themselves to the study and the application of them; depreciating the mere outward forms of religion, until they had come to be estimated at their real value; in short, a learned, ingenious, benevolent, amiable, timid, irresolute man, who, bearing the responsibility, resigned to others the glory of rescuing the human mind from the bondage of a thousand years. The distance between his career and that of Luther was, therefore, continually enlarging, until they at length moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. The reformer foresaw and deprecated this collision; and Bossuet has condemned as servile the celebrated letter in which Luther endeavoured to avert the impending contest. In common with many of his censures of the great father of the protestant churches, this is evidently the result of prejudice. It was conceived with tenderness, and expressed with becoming dignity.

"I do not," he says, "reproach you in your *estrangem*ents from us, fearing lest I should hinder the cause which you maintain against our common enemies the papists. For the same reason, it gives me no displeasure that, in many of your works, you have sought to obtain their favour, or to appease their hostility, by assailing us with undeserved reproaches and sarcasms. It is obvious that God has not given you the energy or the courage requisite for an open and fearless attack on these monsters, nor am I of a temper to exact from you what is beyond your strength."—"I have respected your infirmity, and that measure of the gifts of God which is in you. None can deny that you have promoted the cause of literature, thus opening the way to the right understanding of the Scriptures; or that the endowment which you have thus received from God is magnificent and worthy of all admiration. Here is a just cause for gratitude. I have never desired that you should quit your cautious and measured course to enter our camp. Great are the services you render by your genius and eloquence; and as your heart fails you, it is best that you should serve God with such powers as He has given you. My only apprehension is, lest you should permit yourself to be dragged by our enemies to publish an attack upon our doctrines, for then I should be compelled to resist you to the face."—"Things have now reached a point at which we should feel no anxiety for our cause, even though Erasmus himself should direct all his abilities against us. It is no wonder that our party should be impatient of your attacks. Human weakness is alarmed and oppressed by the weight of the name of Erasmus. Once to be lashed by Erasmus is a far different thing from being exposed to the assaults of all the papists put together."—"I have written all this in proof of my candour, and because I desire that God may impart to you a spirit worthy of your name. If that spirit be withheld, at least let me implore you to remain a mere spectator of our tragedy. Do not join your forces to our enemies. Abstain from writing against me, and I will write nothing against you."

This lofty tone grated on the fastidious ear of the monarch of literature. He watched his opportunity, and inflicted a terrible revenge. To have attacked the doctrines of the Reformation would have been to hazard an unanswerable charge of inconsistency. But Luther, in exploring his path, had lost his way in the labyrinth of the question of free will; and had published opinions which were nothing short of the avowal of absolute fatalism. In a treatise *De Libero Arbitrio*, Erasmus made a brilliant charge on this exposed part of his adversary's position: exhausting all the resources of his sagacity, wit, and learning, to lower the theological character of the founder of the Lutheran Church. The reformer staggered beneath this blow. For metaphysical debate he was ill prepared—to the learning of his antagonist he had no pretension—and to his wit could oppose nothing but indignant vehemence. His answer, *De Servo Arbitrio*, has been confessed by his most ardent admirers, to have been but a feeble defence to his formidable enemy. The temper in which he conducted the dispute may be judged from the following example:—"Erasmus, that king of amphibology, reposes calmly on his amphibological throne, cheats us with his ambiguous language, and claps his hands when he finds us entangled amongst his insidious tropes, like beasts of chase fallen into the toils. Then seizing the occasion for his rhetoric, he springs on his captive with loud cries, tearing, scourging, tormenting, and devoting him to the infernals, because, as it pleases him to say, his words have been understood in a calumnious, scandalous and Satanic sense, though it was his own design that they should be so taken. See him come on creeping like a viper." &c., &c.

To the last, the sense of this defeat would appear to have clung to Luther. Accustomed to triumph in theological debate, he had been overthrown in the presence of abashed friends and exulting enemies; and the record of his familiar conversation bears deep traces of his keen remembrance of this humiliation. Many of the contumelious words ascribed to him on this subject, if they really fell from his lips, were probably some of those careless expressions in which most men indulge in the confidence of private life; and which, when quoted with the utmost literal exactness, assume, in books published for the perusal of the world at large, a new meaning and an undesigned emphasis. But there is little difficulty in receiving as authentic the words he is said to have pronounced when gazing at the picture of Erasmus—that it was, like himself, full of craft and malice; a comment on the countenance of that illustrious scholar, as depicted by Holbien, from which it is impossible altogether to dissent.

The contests with Erasmus and the sacramentarians had taken place in that debatable land which religion and philosophy each claims for her own. But Luther was now to oppose a revolt not merely against philosophy and religion, but against decency and common sense. Equally astounding and scandalous were the antics which the minds of men performed when, exempt from the control of their ancient prepossessions, they had not as yet been brought into subjection to any other. Throughout the north of Germany and the Netherlands, there were found many converts to the belief, that a divorce might be effected between the virtues which the gospel exacts, and those new relations between man and the Author of his being, which it at once creates and reveals; that, in short, it was possible to be at the same time a Christian and a knave. The connexion between this sottish delirium, and the rejection of infant baptism, was an accident, or at most a caprice; and the name of Anabaptist, afterwards borne by so many wise and good men, is unfortunately, though indelibly associated with the crazy rabble who first assumed or received it at Munster. Herman Shaprœda, and after him Rothmann, were the first who instructed the inhabitants of that city in these ill-omened novelties; and they quickly gained the authority which any bold and unscrupulous guide may command in times when hereditary creeds have been abandoned by those who want the capacity or the knowledge to shape out new opinions for themselves. He who has not received adult baptism is not a Christian, he who is not a Christian is a pagan; and it is the duty of the faithful to oppose the enemies of truth by all arms, spiritual or secular, within their reach. Strong in this reasoning, and stronger still in numbers and in zeal, the Anabaptists declared open war, expelled the Catholics and Lutherans from the city, pillaged the churches and convents, and adopted as their watchword the exhortation to repent, with which the Baptist of old had addressed the multitudes who surrounded him in the wilderness of Judea. If the insurgents did no works meet for repentance, they did many to be bitterly repented of. Their success was accompanied by cruelty, and followed by still fouler crimes. John de Mattheison, their chief prophet, established a community of goods, and committed to the flames every book except the Bible. John of Leyden, his successor, was a journeyman tailor, and, though at once a rogue and a fanatic, was not without some qualities which might have adorned a better cause. He conducted the defence of the city against the bishop with as much skill and gallantry as if his accustomed seat had been, not the shopboard, but the saddle of a belted knight. In the Scriptures, which his predecessor had exempted from the general conflagration, he found a sanction for the plurality of wives, and proofs that the sceptre of David had passed into his own hands. Twelve princes, representing the heads of the tribes of Israel, received from him authority to ascend the thrones of Europe; and apostles were sent to the great cities of Germany to propagate the new faith, and to attest the miracles of which they had been the witnesses. The doctrine they taught was less abstruse than might have been anticipated. It consisted in these propositions:—There have been four prophets: the true are King David and John of Leyden; the false are the pope and Martin Luther: but Luther is worse than the pope. While this pithy creed was inculcated without the walls, the most frightful debaucheries, and a strange burlesque on royalty, went on within. The king paraded the city, attended by his queen, and followed by a long train of led horses caparisoned in gold brocade, a drawn sword being borne at his left hand, and a crown and Bible at his right. Seated on a throne in the public square, he received petitions from supplicants prostrate on the earth before him. Then followed impious parodies on the most sacred offices of the Christian worship, and scenes of profligacy which may not be described. To these, ere long, succeeded horrors which rendered the New Jerusalem no inapt antitype of the old. The conquered king expiated his crimes on the scaffold,—enduring protracted and inhuman torments with a firmness which redeems his character from the abhorrence to which it had so many indisputable titles. Yet the story is not without interest. The rapidity with which the contagion of such stupid extravagances was propagated, and the apparent genuineness of the belief which a man of much fortitude and some acuteness at length yielded to the coinage of his own brain, however frequent, are still curious phenomena in the science of mental nosology. From his answers to the interrogatories which attended his trial, it may be inferred that he was perfectly sane. His mind had been bewildered, partly by a depraved imagination and ungoverned appetites, and partly by his encounter with questions too large for his capacity, and with detached sentences from Holy Writ, of which he perceived neither the obvious sense nor the more sublime intimations. The memory of this guilty, presumptuous and unhappy man, is rescued from oblivion by the audacity of his enterprise, and still more by the influence it exerted in arresting the progress of the Reformation.

The reproach, however unmerited, fell heavily on Luther. It is the common fate of all who dare to become leaders in the war against abuses, whether in religious or political society, to be confounded with the baser sort of innovators, who at once hate their persons, and exaggerate and caricature the principles on which they have acted. For this penalty of rendering eminent services to the world every wise man is prepared, and every brave man endures it firmly, in the belief that a day is coming when his fame will be no longer oppressed by this unworthy association. Luther's faith in the ultimate deliverance of his good name from the obloquy cast on it by the madness of the Anabaptists, has but imperfectly been justified by the event. Long after his name belonged to the brightest page of human history, it found in Bossuet an antagonist as inveterate as Tetzel, more learned than Cajetan, and surpassing Erasmus himself in eloquence and ingenuity. Later still has arisen, in the person of Mr. Hallam, a censor, whose religious opinions, unquestionable integrity, boundless knowledge, and admirable genius, give a fearful weight to his unfavourable judgment of the Father of the Reformation. Neither of these great writers, indeed, countenance the vulgar calumny which would identify the principles of Martin Luther with those of John of Leyden, although both of them arraign him in nearly the same terms, as having adopted and taught the antinomian doctrines, of which the Anabaptists exhibited the practical results.

The course we are shaping having brought us within reach of the whirlpools of this interminable controversy, roaring in endless circles over a dark and bottomless abyss, we cannot altogether yield to that natural impulse which would pass them by in cautious silence and with averted eyes. The *Labarum* of Luther was a banner inscribed with the legend "Justification by Faith"—the compendium, the essence, the *Alpha* and the *Omega* of his distinctive creed. Of the many, received or possible interpretations of this enigmatical symbol, that which Bossuet and Mr. Hallam regard as most accordant with the views of the great standard-bearer himself, may be stated in the following terms:—If a man be firmly assured that his sins have been remitted by God, in the exercise of a mercy gratuitous and unmerited as it respects the offender himself, but accorded as the merited reward of the great propitiation, that man stands within the line which, even in this life, separates the objects of the Divine favour from the objects of the Divine displeasure. We believe this epitome of the Lutheran doctrine to be inaccurate, and, but for the greatness of the names by which it is sanctioned, we should have ventured to add, superficial. In hazarding a different translation of Luther's meaning into the language of the world we live in, we do but oppose one assertion to another, leaving the whole weight of authority on the unfavourable side. The appeal ultimately lies to those whose studies have rendered them familiar with the reformer's writings, and especially with his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," which he was wont affectionately to call his Catherine de Bora. It must be conceded that they abound in expressions which, detached from the mass, would more than justify the censure of the historian of the "Literature of the Middle Ages." But no writer would be less fairly judged than Luther by isolated passages. Too impetuous to pause for exact discrimination, too long entangled in scholastic learning to have ever entirely recovered the natural relish for plain common sense, and compelled habitually to move in that turbid polemical region which pure and unrefracted light never visits, Luther, it must be confessed, is intelligible only to the impartial and laborious, and might also be supposed to have courted the reproaches which he least deserves. Stripped of the technicalities of divinity and of the schools, his *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ* may, perhaps, with no material error be thus explained.

Define the word "conviction" as a deliberate assent to the truth of any statement, and the word "persuasion" as the habitual reference to any such truth (real or supposed) as a rule of conduct; and it follows, that we are persuaded of many things of which we are not convinced: which is credulity or superstition. Thus, Cicero was persuaded of the sanctity of the mysteries which he celebrated as one of the College of Augurs. But the author of the Treatise *De Natura Deorum* had certainly no corresponding convictions. We are convinced of much of which we are not persuaded, which, in theological language, is a "dead faith." The Marquis of Worcester deliberately assented to the truth, that the expansive force of steam could be applied to propel a vessel through the water; but wanting the necessary "persuasion," he left to others the praise of the discovery. Again, there are many propositions of which we are at once convinced and persuaded, and this in the Lutheran style is a "living or saving faith." In this sense Columbus believed the true configuration of the earth, and launched his caravels to make known the two hemispheres to each other. It is by the aid of successful experiment engendering confidence; of habit producing facility; and of earnest thoughts quickening the imagination and kindling desire, that our opinions thus ripen into motives, and our theoretical convictions into active persuasion. It is, therefore, nothing else than a contradiction in terms to speak of Christian faith separable from moral virtue! The practical results of that as of any other motive, will vary directly as the intensity of the impulse, and inversely as the number and force of the impediments; but a motive which produces no motion, is the same thing as an attraction which does not draw, or as a propensity which does not incline. Far different as was the style in which Luther enounced his doctrine, the careful study of his writings will, we think, convince any dispassionate man that such was his real meaning. The faith of which he wrote was not a mere opinion, or a mere emotion. It was a mental energy, of slow but stately growth, of which an intellectual assent was the basis; high and holy tendencies the lofty superstructure; and a virtuous life the inevitable use and destination. In his own emphatic words:—"We do not say the sun *ought* to shine, a good tree *ought* to produce good fruit, seven and three *ought* to make ten. The sun shines by its own proper nature, without being bidden to do so; in the same manner the good tree yields its good fruit; seven and three have made ten from everlasting—it is needless to require them to do so hereafter."

If any credit is due to his great antagonist, Luther's doctrine of "Justification" is not entitled to the praise or censure of novelty. Bossuet resents this claim as injurious to the Church of Rome, and as founded on an extravagant misrepresentation of her real doctrines. To ascribe to the great and wise men of whom she justly boasts, or indeed to attribute to any one of sound mind, the dogma or the dream which would deliberately transfer the ideas of the market to the relations between man and his Creator, is nothing better than an ignorant and uncharitable bigotry. To maintain that, till Luther dispelled the illusion, the Christian world regarded the good actions of this life as investing even him who performs them best, with a *right* to demand from his Maker an eternity of uninterrupted and perfect bliss, is just as rational as to claim for him the detection of the universal error which had assigned to the animal man a place among the quadrupeds. There is in every human mind a certain portion of indestructible common sense. Small as this may be in most of us, it is yet enough to rescue us all, at least when sane and sober, from the stupidity of thinking not only that the relations of creditor and debtor can really subsist between ourselves and Him who made us, but that a return of such inestimable value can be due from Him for such ephemeral and imperfect services as ours. People may talk foolishly on these matters; but no one seriously believes this. Luther slew no such monster, for there were none such to be slain. The error which he refuted was far more subtle and refined than this, and is copiously explained by Hooker, to whose splendid sermon on the subject it is a "good work" to refer any to whom it is unknown.

The celebrated thesis of "Justification by Faith," if really an Antinomian doctrine, was peculiar to Luther and to his followers only in so far as he extricated it from a mass of superstitions by which it had been obscured, and assigned to it the prominence in his system to which it was justly entitled. But if his indignation had been roused against those who had darkened this great truth, they by whom it was made an apology for lewdness and rapine were the objects of his scorn and abhorrence. His attack on the Anabaptists is conceived in terms so vigorous and so whimsical, that it is difficult to resist the temptation to exhibit some extracts. But who would needlessly disturb the mould beneath which lies interred and forgotten a mass of disgusting folly, which in a remote age exhaled a moral pestilence? Resolving all the sinister phenomena of life, by assuming the direct interference of the devil and his angels in the affairs of men, Luther thought that this influence had been most unskilfully employed at Munster. It was a *coup manque* on the part of the great enemy of mankind. It showed that Satan was but a bungler at his art. The evil one had been betrayed into this gross mistake that the world might be on their guard against the more astute artifices to which he was about to resort:

"These new theologians did not," he said, "explain themselves very clearly." "Having hot soup in his mouth, the devil was obliged to content himself with mumbling out *mum, mum,** wishing doubtless to say something worse." "The spirit which would deceive the world must not begin by yielding to the fascinations of woman, by grasping the emblems and honours of royalty, still less by cutting people's throats. This is too broad; rapacity and oppression can deceive no one. The real deceit will be practised by him who shall dress himself in mean apparel, assume a lamentable countenance, hang down his head, refuse money, abstain from meat, fly from woman as so much poison, disclaim all temporal authority, and reject all honours as damnable; and who then, creeping softly towards the throne, the sceptre, and the keys, shall pick them up and possess himself of them by stealth. Such is the man who would succeed, who would deceive the angels, and the very elect. This would indeed be a splendid devil, with a plumage more gorgeous than the peacock or the pheasant. But thus impudently to seize the crown, to take not merely one wife, but as many as caprice or appetite suggests—oh! it is the conduct of a mere schoolboy devil, of a devil at his A B C; or rather, it is the true Satan—Satan, the learned and the crafty, but fettered by the hands of God, with chains so heavy that he cannot move. It is to warn us, it is to teach us to fear his chastisements, before the field is thrown open to a more subtle devil, who will assail us no longer with the A B C, but with the real, the difficult text. If this mere *deviling* at his letters can do such things, what will he not do when he comes to act as a reasonable, knowing, skilful, lawyer-like, theological devil?"

These various contests produced in the mind of Luther the effects which painful experience invariably yields, when the search for truth, prompted by the love of truth, has been long and earnestly maintained. Advancing years brought with them an increase of candour, moderation, and charity. He had lived to see his principles strike their roots deeply through a large part of the Christian world, and he anticipated, with perhaps too sanguine hopes, their universal triumph. His unshaken reliance in them was attested by his dying breath. But he had also lived to witness the defection of some of his allies, and the guilt and folly of others. Prolonged inquiry had disclosed to him many difficulties which had been overlooked in the first ardour of the dispute, and he had become painfully convinced that the establishment of truth is an enterprise incomparably more arduous than the overthrow of error. His constitutional melancholy deepened into a more habitual sadness—his impetuosity gave way to a more serene and pensive temper—and as the tide of life ebbed with still increasing swiftness, he was chiefly engaged in meditating on those cardinal and undisputed truths on which the weary mind may securely repose, and the troubled heart be still. The maturer thoughts of age could not, however, quell the rude vigour and fearless confidence, which had borne him through his early contests. With little remaining fondness or patience for abstruse speculations, he was challenged to debate one of the more subtle points of theology. His answer cannot be too deeply pondered by polemics at large. "Should we not," he said, "get on better in this discussion with the assistance of a jug or two of beer?" The offended disputant retired,—"the devil," observed Luther, "being a haughty spirit, who can bear any thing better than being laughed at." This growing contempt for unprofitable questions was indicated by a corresponding decline in Luther's original estimate of the importance of some of the minor topics in debate with the Church of Rome. He was willing to consign to silence the question of the veneration due to the saints. He suspended his judgment respecting prayers for the dead. He was ready to acquiesce in the practice of auricular confession, for the solace of those who regarded it as an essential religious observance. He advised Spalatin to do whatever he thought best respecting the elevation of the host, deprecating only any positive rule on the subject. He held the established ceremonies to be useful, from the impression they left on gross and uncultivated minds. He was tolerant of images in the churches, and censured the whole race of image-breakers with his accustomed vehemence. Even the use of the vernacular tongue in public worship, he considered as a convenient custom, not an indispensable rule. Carlostadt had insisted upon it as essential. "Oh, this is an incorrigible spirit," replied the more tolerant reformer; "for ever and for ever positive obligations and sins!"

But while his Catholic spirit thus raised him above the exaggerated estimate of those external things which chiefly attracted the hostility of narrower minds, his sense of the value of those great truths in which he judged the essence of religion to consist, was acquiring increased intensity and depth. In common with Montaigne and Richard Baxter, (names hardly to be associated on any other ground,) he considered the Lord's prayer as surpassing every other devotional exercise. "It is my prayer," said Luther; "there is nothing like it." In the same spirit, he preferred the gospel of St. John to all the other sacred books, as containing more of the language of Christ himself. As he felt, so he taught. He practised the most simple and elementary style of preaching. "If," he said, "in my sermons I thought of Melancthon and other doctors, I should do no good; but I speak with perfect plainness for the ignorant, and that satisfies every body. Such Greek, Latin, and Hebrew as I have, I reserve for the learned." "Nothing is more agreeable or useful for a common audience than to preach on the duties and examples of Scripture. Sermons on grace and justification fall coldly on their ears." He taught that good and true theology consisted in the practice, the habit, and the life of the Christian graces—Christ being the foundation. "Such, however," he says, "is not our theology now-a-days. We have substituted for it a rational and speculative theology. This was not the case with David. He acknowledged his sins, and said, *Miserere mei, Domine!*"

Luther's power of composition is, indeed, held very cheap by a judge so competent as Mr. Hallam; nor is it easy to commend his elaborate style. It was compared by himself to the earthquake and the wind which preceded the still small voice addressed to the prophet in the wilderness; and is so turbulent, copious, and dogmatical, as to suggest the supposition that it was dictated to a class of submissive pupils, under the influence of extreme excitement. Obscure, redundant, and tautologous as these writings appear, they are still redeemed from neglect, not only by the mighty name of their author, but by that all-pervading vitality and downright earnestness which atone for the neglect of all the mere artifices of style; and by that profound familiarity with the sacred oracles, which far more than compensates for the absence of the speculative wisdom which is drawn from lower sources. But the reformer's lighter and more occasional works not unfrequently breathe the very soul of eloquence. His language in these, ranges between colloquial homeliness and the highest dignity,—now condensed into vivid figures, and then diffused into copious amplification,—exhibiting the successive phases of his ardent, melancholy, playful, and heroic character in such rapid succession, and with such perfect harmony, as to resemble the harp of Dryden's Timotheus, alternately touched and swept by the hand of the master—a performance so bold and so varied, as to scare the critic from the discharge of his office. The address, for example, to the Swabian insurgents and nobles, if not executed with the skill, is at least conceived in the spirit of a great orator. The universal testimony of all the most competent judges, attests the excellence of his translation of the Bible, and assigns to him, in the literature of his country, a station corresponding to that of the great men to whom James committed the corresponding office in our own.

Bayle has left to the friends of Luther no duty to perform in the defence of his moral character, but that of appealing to the unanswerable reply which his Dictionary contains to the charges preferred against the reformer by his enemies. One unhappy exception is to be made. It is impossible to read without pain the names of Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, amongst the subscribers to the address to the landgrave of Hesse, on the subject of his intended polygamy. Those great but fallible men remind his highness of the distinction between universal laws and such as admit of dispensation in particular cases. They cannot publicly sanction polygamy. But his highness is of a peculiar constitution, and is exhorted seriously to examine all the considerations laid before him; yet, if he is absolutely resolved to marry a second time, it is their opinion that he should do so as secretly as possible! Fearful is the energy with which the "Eagle of Meaux" pounces on this fatal error,—tearing to pieces the flimsy pretexts alleged in defence of such an evasion of the Christian code. The charge admits of no defence. To the inference drawn from it against the reformer's doctrine, every Protestant has a conclusive answer. Whether in faith or practice, he acknowledges no infallible Head but one.

But we have wandered far and wide from our proper subject. Where, all this while, is the story of Luther's education, of his visit to Rome, of the sale of indulgences, of the denunciations of Tetzel, of the controversy with Eccius, the Diets of Worms and Augsburg, the citations before Cajetan and Charles, the papal excommunication, and the appeal to a general council? These, and many other of the most momentous incidents of the reformer's life, are recorded in M. D'Aubigne's work, from which our attention has been diverted by matters of less account, but perhaps a little less familiar. It would be unpardonable to dismiss such a work, with a merely ceremonious notice. The absolute merit of this life of Martin Luther is great, but the comparative value far greater. In the English language, it has no competitor; and though Melancthon himself was the biographer of his friend, we believe that no foreign tongue contains so complete and impressive a narrative of these events. It is true that M. D'Aubigne neither deserves nor claims a place amongst those historians, usually distinguished as philosophical. He does not aspire to illustrate the principles which determine or pervade the character, the policy, or the institutions of mankind. He arms himself with no dispassionate skepticism, and scarcely affects to be impartial. To tell his tale copiously and clearly, is the one object of his literary ambition. To exhibit the actors on the scene of life, as the free but unconscious agents of the Divine Will, is the higher design with which he writes, to trace the mysterious intervention of Providence in reforming the errors and abuses of the Christian Church is his immediate end; and to exalt the name of Luther, his labour of love. These purposes, as far as they are attainable, are effectually attained. M. D'Aubigne is a Protestant of the original stamp, and a biographer of the old fashion;—not a calm, candid, discriminating weigher and measurer of a great man's parts, but a warm-hearted champion of his glory, and a resolute apologist even for his errors;—ready to do battle in his cause with all who shall impugn or derogate from his fame. His book is conceived in the spirit, and executed with all the vigour, of Dr. M'Crie's "Life of Knox." He has all our lamented countryman's sincerity, all his deep research, more skill in composition, and a greater mastery of subordinate details; along with the same inestimable faculty of carrying on his story from one stage to another, with an interest which never subsides, and a vivacity which knows no intermission. If he displays no familiarity with the moral sciences, he is no mean proficient in that art which reaches to perfection only in the drama or the romance. This is not the talent of inventing, but the gift of discerning, incidents which impart life and animation to narrative. For M. D'Aubigne is a writer of scrupulous veracity. He is at least an honest guide, though his prepossessions may be too strong to render him worthy of implicit confidence. They are such, however, as to make him the uncompromising and devoted advocate of those cardinal tenets on which Luther erected the edifice of the Reformation. To the one great article on which the reformer assailed the papacy, the eye of the biographer is directed with scarcely less intentness. To this every other truth is viewed as subordinate and secondary; and although, on this favourite point of doctrine M. D'Aubigne's meaning is too often obscured by declaration, yet must he be hailed by every genuine friend of the Reformation, as having raised a powerful voice in favour of one of those fundamental truths which, so long as they are faithfully taught and diligently observed, will continue to form the great bulwarks of Christendom against the overweening estimate, and the despotic use, of human authority, in opposition to the authority of the revealed will of God.

LIFE AND TIMES OF RICHARD BAXTER.*

[EDINBURGH REVIEW, 1839.]

THIS publication reminds us of an oversight in omitting to notice the collection of the works of Richard Baxter, edited in the year 1830, by Mr. Orme. It was, in legal phrase, a demand for judgment, in the appeal of the great nonconformist to the ultimate tribunal of posterity, from the censures of his own age, on himself and his writings. We think that the decision was substantially right, and that, on the whole, it must be affirmed. Right it was, beyond all doubt, in so far as it assigned to him an elevated rank amongst those, who, taking the spiritual improvement of mankind for their province, have found there at once the motive and the reward for labours beneath which, unless sustained by that holy impulse, the utmost powers of our frail nature must have prematurely fainted.

About the time when the high-born guests of Whitehall were celebrating the nuptial revels of Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine, and the visiters of low degree were defraying the cost by the purchase of titles and monopolies, there was living at the pleasant village of Eton Constantine, between Wrekin Hill and the Severn, a substantial yeoman, incurious alike about the politics of the empire and the wants of the exchequer. Yet was he not without his vexations. On the green before his door, a Maypole, hung with garlands, allured the retiring congregation to dance out the Sunday afternoon to the sound of fife and tabret, while he, intent on the study of the sacred volume, was greeted with no better names than puritan, precisian, and hypocrite. If he bent his steps to the parish church, venerable as it was, and picturesque, in contempt of all styles and orders of architecture, his case was not much mended. The aged and purblind incumbent executed his weekly task with the aid of strange associates. One of them laid aside the flail, and another the thimble, to mount the reading-desk. To these succeeded "the excellentest stage-player in all the country, and a good gamester, and a good fellow." This worthy having received holy orders, forged the like for a neighbour's son, who, on the strength of that title officiated in the pulpit and at the altar. Next in this goodly list came an attorney's clerk, who had "tippled himself in so great poverty," that he had no other way to live but by assuming the pastoral care of the flock at Eton Constantine. Time out of mind, the curate had been ex officio the depositary of the secular, as well as of the sacred literature of the parish; and to these learned persons our yeoman was therefore fain to commit the education of his only son and namesake, Richard Baxter. Such, from his tenth to his sixteenth year were the teachers of the most voluminous theological writer in the English language. Of that period of his life, the only incidents which can now be ascertained are that his love of apples was inordinate, and that on the subject of robbing orchards, he held, in practice at least, the doctrines handed down amongst schoolboys by an unbroken tradition. Almost as barren is the only extant record of the three remaining years of his pupilage. They were spent at the endowed school at Wroxeter, which he quitted at the age of nineteen, destitute of all mathematical and physical science—ignorant of Hebrew—a mere smatterer in Greek, and possessed of as much Latin as enabled him in after life to use it with reckless facility. Yet a mind so prolific, and which yielded such early fruits, could not advance to manhood without much well-dressed culture. The Bible which lay on his father's table, formed the whole of the good man's library, and would have been ill-exchanged for the treasures of the Vatican. He had been no stranger to the cares, nor indeed to the disorders of life; and, as his strength declined, it was his delight to inculcate on his inquisitive boy the lessons which inspired wisdom teaches most persuasively, when illustrated by dear-bought experience, and enforced by parental love. For the mental infirmities of the son no better discipline could have been found. A pyrrhonist of nature's making, his threescore years and ten might have been exhausted in a fruitless struggle to adjudicate between antagonist theories, if his mind had not thus been subjugated to the supreme authority of Holy Writ, by an influence coeval with the first dawn of reason, and associated indissolubly with his earliest and most enduring affections. It is neither the wise nor the good by whom the patrimony of opinion is most lightly regarded. Such is the condition of our existence, that beyond the precincts of abstract science, we must take much for granted, if we would make any advance in knowledge, or live to any useful end. Our hereditary prepossessions must not only precede our acquired judgments, but must conduct us to them. To begin by questioning every thing, is to end by answering nothing; and a premature revolt from human authority is but an incipient rebellion against conscience, reason, and truth. Launched into the ocean of speculative inquiry, without the anchorage of parental instruction and filial reverence, Baxter would have been drawn by his constitutional tendencies into that skeptical philosophy, through the long annals of which no single name is to be found to which the gratitude of mankind has been yielded, or is justly due. He had much in common with the most eminent doctors of that school—the animal frame characterized by sluggish appetites, languid passions, and great nervous energy; the intellectual nature distinguished by subtlety to seize distinctions more than by wit to detect analogies; by the power to dive, instead of the faculty to soar; by skill to analyze subjective truths, rather than by ability to combine them with each other and with objective realities. But what was wanting in his sensitive, and deficient in his intellectual structure, was balanced and corrected by the spiritual elevation of his mind. If not enamoured of the beautiful, nor conversant with the ideal, nor able to grasp the comprehensive and the abstract, he enjoyed that clear mental vision which attends on moral purity—the rectitude of judgment which rewards the subjection of the will to the reason—the loftiness of thought awakened by habitual communion with the source of light—and the earnest stability of purpose inseparable from the predominance of the social above the selfish affections. Skepticism and devotion were the conflicting elements of his internal life; but the radiance from above gradually dispersed the vapours from beneath, and, through a half a century of pain and strife, and agitation, he enjoyed that settled tranquillity which no efforts merely intellectual can attain, nor any speculative doubts destroy,—the peace, of which it is said, that it passes understanding.

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* *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter, with a Preface, giving some Account of the Author, and of this edition of his Practical Works; and an Essay on his Genius, Works, and Times.* 4 vols. 8vo. London, 1838.

Baxter was born in 1615, and consequently attained his early manhood amidst events ominous of approaching revolutions. Deep and latent as are the ultimate causes of the continued existence of Episcopacy in England, nothing can be less recondite than the human agency employed in working out that result. Nursed by the Tudors, adopted by the Stuarts, and wedded in her youth to a powerful aristocracy, the Anglican church retains the indelible stamp of these early alliances. To the great, the learned, and the worldly wise, it has for three centuries afforded a resting-place and a refuge. But a long interval had elapsed before the national temples and hierarchy were consecrated to the nobler end of enlightening the ignorant, and administering comfort to the poor. Rich beyond all Protestant rivalry in sacred literature, the Church of England, from the days of Parker to those of Laud, had scarcely produced any one considerable work of popular instruction. The pastoral care which Burnett depicted, in the reign of William and Mary, was at that time a vision which, though since nobly fulfilled, no past experience had realized. Till a much later time, the alphabet was among the mysteries which the English church concealed from her catechumens. There is no parallel in the annals of any other Protestant State, of so wonderful a concentration, and so imperfect a diffusion of learning and genius, of piety and zeal. The reigns of Whitgift, Bancroft, and Laud, were unmolested by cares so rude as those of evangelizing the artisans and peasantry. Jewel and Bull, Hall and Donne, Hooker and Taylor, lived and wrote for their peers, and for future ages, but not for the commonalty of their own. Yet was not Christianity bereft in England of her distinctive and glorious privilege. It was still the religion of the poor. Amidst persecution, contempt, and penury, the Puritans had toiled and suffered, and had, not rarely, died in their service. Thus in every city, and almost in every village, they who had eyes to see, and ears to hear, might, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, perceive the harbingers of the coming tempest. Thoughtful and resolute men had transferred the allegiance of the heart from their legitimate, to their chosen leaders; while, unconscious of their danger, the ruling were straining the bonds of authority, in exact proportion to the decrease of their number and their strength. It was when the future pastors of New England were training men to a generous contempt of all sublunary interest for conscience' sake, that Laud, not content to be terrible to the founders of Connecticut and New England, braved an enmity far more to be dreaded than theirs. With a view to the ends to which his life was devoted, his truth and courage would have been well exchanged for the wily and time-serving genius of Williams. Supported by Heylin, Cosins, Montague, and many others, who adopted or exaggerated his own opinions, he precipitated the temporary overthrow of a church, in harmony with the character, and strong in the affections of the people; upheld by a long line of illustrious names; connected with the whole aristocracy of the realm; and enthusiastically defended by the sovereign.

Baxter's theological studies were commenced during these tumults, and were insensibly biassed by them. The ecclesiastical polity had reconciled him to Episcopal ordination; but as he read, and listened, and observed his attachment to the established ritual and discipline progressively declined. He began by rejecting the practice of indiscriminate communion. He was dissatisfied with the compulsory subscription to articles, and the baptismal cross. "Deeper thoughts on the point of Episcopacy" were suggested to him by the *et cetera* oath; and these reflections soon rendered him an irreconcilable adversary to the "English diocesan frame." He distributed the sacred elements to those who would not kneel to receive them, and religiously abjured the surplice. Thus ripe for spiritual censures, and prepared to endure them, he was rescued from the danger he had braved by the demon of civil strife. The Scots in the north, and the Parliament in the south, summoned Charles and Laud to more serious cares than those of enforcing conformity, and left Baxter free to enlarge and to propagate his discoveries.

With liberty of speech and action, his mind was visited by a corresponding audacity of thought. Was there indeed a future life?—Was the soul of man immortal?—Were the Scriptures true?—were the questions which now assaulted and perplexed him. They came not as vexing and importunate suggestions, but "under pretence of sober reason," and all the resources of his understanding were summoned to resist the tempter. Self-deception was abhorrent from his nature. He feared the face of no speculative difficulty. Dark as were the shapes which crossed his path, they must be closely questioned; and gloomy as was the abyss to which they led, it was to be unhesitatingly explored. The result needs not to be stated. From a long and painful conflict he emerged victorious, but not without bearing to the grave some scars to mark the severity of the struggle. No man was ever blessed with more profound convictions; but so vast and elaborate was the basis of argumentation on which they rested, that to re-examine the texture, and ascertain the coherence of the materials of which it was wrought, formed the still recurring labour of his whole future life.

While the recluse is engulfed in the vortices of metaphysics, the victims of passion are still urged forward in their wild career of guilt and misery. From the transcendental labyrinths through which Baxter was winding his solitary and painful way, the war recalled him to the stern realities of life. In the immediate vicinity of the earlier military operations, Coventry had become a city of refuge to him, and to a large body of his clerical brethren. They believed, in the simplicity of their hearts, that Essex, Waller, and Cromwell, were fighting the battles of Charles, and that their real object was to rescue the king from the thraldom of the malignants, and the church from the tyranny of the prelatists. "We kept," says Baxter, speaking of himself and his associates, "to our old principles, and thought all others had done so too, except a very few inconsiderable persons. We were unfeignedly for king and Parliament. We believed that the war was only to save the Parliament and kingdom from the papists and delinquents, and to remove the dividers, that the king might again return to his Parliament, and that no changes might be made in religion, but by the laws which had his free consent. We took the true happiness of king and people, church and state, to be our end, and so we understood the covenant, engaging both against papists and schismatics; and when the Court News-Book told the world of the swarms of Anabaptists in our armies, we thought it had been a mere lie, because it was not so with us."

Ontology and scholastic divinity have their charms, and never did man confess them more than Richard Baxter. But the pulse must beat languidly indeed, when the superior fascination of the "tented field" is not acknowledged; nor should it derogate from the reverence which attends his name, to admit that he felt and indulged this universal excitement. Slipping away from Durandus, Bradwardine, Suarez, and Ariminensis, he visited Edgehill and Naseby while the parliamentary armies still occupied the ground on which they had fought. He found the conquerors armed *cap-a-pie* for spiritual, as well as carnal combats; and to convert the troops from their theological errors, was the duty which, he was assured, had been committed to him by Providence. Becoming accordingly chaplain to Whalley's regiment, he witnessed in that capacity many a skirmish, and was present at the sieges of Bristol, Sherborne, and Worcester. Rupert and Goring proved less stubborn antagonists than the seekers and levellers of the lieutenant-general's camp; and Baxter was "still employed in preaching, conferring, and still disputing against their confounding errors." The soldiers discoursed as earnestly, and even published as copiously as himself. After many an affair of posts, the hostile parties at length engaged in a pitched battle at Amersham in Buckinghamshire. "When the public talking-day came," says Baxter, "I took the reading pew, and Pitchford's cornet and troopers took the gallery. There did the leader of the Chesham men begin, and afterwards Pitchford's soldiers set in; and I alone disputed against them from morning until almost night." Too old a campaigner to retire from the field in the presence of his enemy, "he staid it out till they first rose and went away." The honours of the day were, however, disputed. In the strange book published by Edwards, under his appropriate title of "Gangræna," the fortunes of the field were chronicled; and there, as we are informed by Baxter himself, may be read "the abundance of nonsense uttered on the occasion."

Cromwell regarded these polemics with ill-disguised aversion, and probably with secret contempt. He had given Baxter but a cold welcome to the army. "He would not dispute with me at all," is a fact related by the good man with evident surprise; "but he would in good discourse very fluently pour out himself in the extolling of free grace, which was savoury to those that had right principles, though he had some misunderstanding of free grace himself. He was a man of excellent natural parts for affection and oratory, but not well seen in the principles of his religion; of a sanguine complexion, naturally of such a vivacity, hilarity, and alacrity as another man hath when he hath drunken a cup too much; but naturally, also, so far from humble thoughts of himself, that it was his ruin." The protector had surrendered his powerful mind to the religious fashions of his times, and never found the leisure or the inclination for deep inquiry into a subject on which it was enough for his purposes to excel in fluent and savoury discourse. Among those purposes, to obtain the approbation of his own conscience was not the least sincere. His devotion was ardent, and his piety genuine. But the alliance between habits of criminal self-indulgence, and a certain kind of theopathy, is but too ordinary a phenomenon. That at each step of his progress, Cromwell should have been deceived and sustained by some sophistry, is the less wonderful, since even now, in retracing his course, it is difficult to ascertain the point at which he first quitted the straight path of duty, or to discover what escape was at length open to him from the web in which he had become involved. There have been many worse, and few greater men. Yet to vindicate his name from the condemnation which rests upon it, would be to confound the distinctions of good and evil as he did, without the apology of being tempted as he was.

Baxter was too profound a moralist to be dazzled by the triumph of bad men, however specious their virtues; or to affect any complacency towards a bad cause, though indebted to it for the only period of serenity which it ever was his lot to enjoy. He had ministered to the forces of the parliamentary general but abhorred the regicide and usurper. In his zeal for the ancient constitution, he had meditated a scheme for detaching his own regiment, and ultimately all the generals of the army, from their leader. They were first to be undermined by a course of logic, and then blown up by the eloquence of the preacher. This profound device in the science of theological engineering would have been counterworked by the lieutenant-general, had he detected it, by methods somewhat less subtle, but certainly not less effective. A fortunate illness defeated the formidable conspiracy, and restored the projector to his pastoral duties and to peace. Even then, his voice was publicly raised against "the treason, rebellion, perfidiousness, and hypocrisy" of Cromwell, who probably never heard, and certainly never heeded, the denunciations of his former chaplain.

Baxter enjoyed the esteem which he would not repay. He was once invited by the protector to preach at court. Sermons in those days were very serious things—point-blank shots at the bosoms of the auditory; and Cromwell was not a man to escape or fear the heaviest pulpit ordnance which could be brought to bear on him. From the many vulnerable points of attack, the preacher selected the crying sin of encouraging sectaries. Not satisfied with the errors of his own days, the great captain had anticipated those of a later age, and had asserted in their utmost extent the dangerous principles of religious liberty. This latitudinarian doctrine may have been suggested by motives merely selfish; and Baxter, at least, could acknowledge no deeper wisdom in which such an innovation could have had its birth. St. Paul was, therefore, made to testify "against the sin committed by politicians, in maintaining divisions for their own ends, that they might fish in troubled waters." He who now occupied the throne of the Stuarts claimed one prerogative to which even they had never aspired. It was that of controverting the argumentation of the pulpit. His zeal for the conversion of his monitor appears to have been exceedingly ardent. Having summoned him to his presence, "he began by a long tedious speech to me," (the narrative is Baxter's) "of God's providence in the change of the government, and how God had owned it, and what great things had been done at home and abroad, in the peace with Spain and Holland, &c. When he had wearied us all with speaking thus slowly for about an hour, I told him it was too great a condescension to acquaint me so fully with all these matters, which were above me; but I told him that we took our ancient monarchy to be a blessing, and not an evil to the land; and humbly craved his patience that I might ask him how England had ever forfeited that blessing, and unto whom that forfeiture was made. Upon that question he was awakened into some passion, and then told me that it was no forfeiture, but God had changed it as pleased him; and then he let fly at the Parliament which thwarted him, and especially by name at four or five of those members who were my chief acquaintances, whom I presumed to defend against his passion, and thus four or five hours were spent."

During this singular dialogue, Lambert fell asleep, an indecorum which, in the court of an hereditary monarch, would have been fatal to the prospects of the transgressor. But the drowsiness of his old comrade was more tolerable to Cromwell than the pertinacity of his former chaplain, against whom he a second time directed the artillery of his logic. On this occasion almost all the privy council were present; liberty of conscience being the thesis, Baxter the respondent, and Cromwell assuming to himself the double office of opponent and moderator. "After another slow, tedious speech of his, I told him," says the auto-biographer, "a little of my judgment, and when two of his company had spun out a great deal more of the time in such like tedious, but more ignorant speeches, I told him, that if he would be at the labour to read it, I could tell him more of my mind in writing two sheets than in that way of speaking many days. He received the paper afterwards, but I scarcely believe that he ever read it. I saw that what he learnt must be from himself, being more disposed to speak many hours than hear one, and little heeding what another said when he had spoken himself."

Whatever may have been the faults, or whatever the motives of the protector, there can be no doubt that under his sway England witnessed a diffusion, till then unknown, of the purest influence of genuine religious principles. The popular historians of that period, from various motives, have disguised or misrepresented the fact; and they who derive their views on this subject from Clarendon or from Hudibras, mistake a caricature for a genuine portrait. To this result, no single man contributed more largely than Baxter himself, by his writings and his pastoral labours. His residence at Kidderminster during the whole of the protectorate was the sabbath of his life; the interval in which his mind enjoyed the only repose of which it was capable, in labours of love, prompted by a willing heart, and unimpeded by a contentious world.

Good Protestants hold, that the supreme Head of the Church reserves to himself alone to meditate and to reign, as his incommunicable attributes; and that to teach and to minister are the only offices he has delegated to the pastors of his flock. Wisdom to scale the heights of contemplation, love to explore the depths of wretchedness—a science and a servitude inseparably combined;—the one investigating the relations between man and his Creator, the other busied in the cares of a self-denying philanthropy—such, at least in theory, are the endowments of that sacred institution, which, first established by the fishermen of Galilee, has been ever since maintained throughout the Christian commonwealth. A priesthood, of which all the members should be animated with this spirit, may be expected when angels shall resume their visits to our earth, and not till then. Human agency, even when employed to distribute the best gifts of Providence to man, must still bear the impress of human guilt and frailty. But if there be one object in this fallen world, to which the eye, jaded by its pageantries and its gloom, continually turns with renovated hope, it is to an alliance, such as that which bound together Richard Baxter and the people among whom he dwelt. He, a poor man, rich beyond the dreams of avarice in mental resources, consecrating alike his poverty and his wealth to their service; ever present to guide, to soothe, to encourage, and, when necessary, to rebuke; shrinking from no aspect of misery, however repulsive, nor from the most loathsome forms of guilt which he might hope to reclaim;—the instructer, at once, and the physician, the almoner and the friend, of his congregation. They, repaying his labours of love with untutored reverence; awed by his reproofs, and rejoicing in his smile; taught by him to discharge the most abject duties, and to endure the most pressing evils of life, as a daily tribute to their Divine benefactor; incurious of the novelties of their controversial age, but meekly thronging the altar from which he dispensed the symbols of their mystical union with each other and their common Head; and, at the close of their obscure, monotonous, but tranquil course, listening to the same parental voice, then subdued to the gentlest tones of sympathy, and telling of bright hopes and of a glorious reward. Little was there in common between Kidderminster and the "sweet smiling" Auburn. Still less alike were the "village preacher," who "ran his godly race," after the fancy of Oliver Goldsmith, and the "painful preacher," whose emaciated form, gaunt visage, and Geneva bands, attested the severity of his studies, and testified against prelatic ascendency. Deeper yet the contrast between the delicate hues and fine touches of the portrait drawn from airy imagination, and Baxter's catalogue of his weekly catechizings, fasts, and conferences: of his Wednesday meetings and Thursday disputations; and of the thirty helps by which he was enabled to quicken into spiritual life the inert mass of a rude and vicious population. But, truth against fiction, all the world over, in the rivalry for genuine pathos and real sublimity. Ever new and charming, after ten thousand repetitions, the plaintive, playful, melodious poetry bears a comparison to the homely tale of the curate of Kidderminster, like that of the tapestried lists of a tournament with the well-fought field of Roncesvalles. Too prolix for quotation, and perhaps too sacred for our immediate purpose, it records one of those moral conquests which bear their testimony to the existence in the human heart of faculties, which, even when most oppressed by ignorance, or benumbed by guilt, may yet be roused to their noblest exercise, and disciplined for their ultimate perfection.

Eventful tidings disturbed these apostolical labours, and but too soon proved how precarious was the tenure of that religious liberty which Baxter at once enjoyed and condemned. With the protectorate it commenced and ended. The death of Oliver, the abdication of Richard, the revival of the Long Parliament, the reappearance of the ejected members, the assembling of a new House of Commons under the auspices of Monk, and the restoration of the Stuarts, progressively endangered, and at length subverted the edifice of ecclesiastical freedom, which the same strong hand had founded and sustained. Yet the issue for awhile seemed doubtful. The sectarians overrated their own strength, and the Episcopalians exaggerated their own weakness. Infallible and impeccable, the Church of Rome is a Tadmor in the wilderness, miraculously erect and beautiful in the midst of an otherwise universal ruin.

The Church of England, liable to err, but always judging right, capable of misconduct, but never acting wrong, is a still more stupendous exception to the weakness and depravity which in all other human institutions signalizes our common nature. But for this well-established truth, a hardy skepticism might have ventured to arraign her as an habitual alarmist. If she is "in danger" at this moment, she has been so from her cradle. Puritans and Presbyterians, Arminians, and Calvinists, Independents and Methodists, had for three centuries threatened her existence, when at last the matricidal hands of the metropolitan of all England, and of the prelate of England's metropolis, were in our own days irreverently laid on her prebendal stalls. One, "whose bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne," in the presence of all other forms of peril, has on this last fearful omen lost his accustomed fortitude; though even the impending overthrow of the church he adorns, finds his wit as brilliant, and his gayety as indestructible as of yore. What wonder, then, if the canons expectant of St. Pauls, at the Court of Breda, surveyed from that Pisgah the fair land of promise with faint misgivings, that the sons of Anak, who occupied the strongholds, should continue to enjoy the milk and honey of their Palestine? Thousands of intrusive incumbents, on whose heads no episcopal hand had been laid, and whose purity no surplice had ever symbolized, possessed the parsonages and pulpits of either episcopal province. A population had grown up unbaptized with the sign of the cross, and instructed to repeat the longer and shorter catechisms of the Westminster divines. Thirty thousand armed Covenanters yielded to Monk and his officers a dubious submission. Cudworth and Lightfoot at Cambridge, Wilkins and Wallis at Oxford, occupied and adorned the chairs of the ejected loyalists. The divine right of episcopacy might yet be controverted by Baxter, Howe, and Owen; and Smectymnus might awaken from his repose in the persons of Marshall, Calamy, and Spurstow. Little marvel, that their eternal charter inspired a less exulting faith than of old in the bishops who had assembled at Breda; that Hyde and Southampton temporized; or that Charles, impatient of the Protestant heresy in all its forms, and of Christianity itself in all its precepts, lent his royal name to an experiment of which deceit was the basis, and persecution the result.

Liberty of conscience, and a concurrence in any act of Parliament, which, on mature deliberation, should be offered for securing it, were solemnly promised by the king, while yet uncertain of the temper of the commons he was about to meet. Ten Presbyterian ministers were added to the list of royal chaplains; and, for once a martyr to the public good, Charles submitted himself to the penalty of assisting at four of their sermons. That with which Baxter greeted him, could not have been recited by the most rapid voice in less than two hours. It is a solemn contrast of the sensual and the spiritual life, without one courtly phrase to relieve his censure of the vices of the great. More soothing sounds were daily falling on the royal ear. The surplice and the Book of Common Prayer had reappeared at the worship of the Lords and Commons. Heads and fellows of colleges enjoyed a restoration scarcely less triumphant than that of their sovereign. Long dormant statutes, arising from their slumbers, menaced the nonconformists; and the truth was revealed to the delighted hierarchy, that the Church of England was still enthroned in the affections of the English people—the very type of their national character—the reflection of their calm good sense—of their reverence for hoar authority—of their fastidious distaste for whatever is scenic, impassioned, and self-assuming—of their deliberate preference for solid reason, even when somewhat dull, to mere rhetoric, however animated—of their love for those grave observances and ancient forms which conduct the mind to self-communion, and lay open to the heart its long accumulated treasure of hidden, though profound emotions. Happy if the confidence in her own strength excited by this discovery, had been blended either with the forgiveness and the love which the Gospel teaches; or with the toleration inculcated by human philosophy; or with the prudence which should be derived from a long course of suffering! Twenty-eight disgraceful years had been blotted from the annals of the Anglican church, and perhaps from the secular history of England.

The time was yet unripe for avowed retaliation, but wrongs and indignities such as those which the Episcopalians had suffered, were neither to be pardoned nor unavenged. Invited by the king to prepare a scheme of future church government, Baxter and his friends, taking Usher's "Reduction of Episcopacy" as their basis, presented to Charles and the prelates a scheme of ecclesiastical reform. "As to Archbishop Usher's model of government," replied the bishops, "we decline it as not consistent with his other learned discourses on the original of Episcopacy and of metropolitans, nor with the king's supremacy in causes ecclesiastical." "Had you read Gerson, Bucer, Parker, Baynes, Salmasius, Blondel, &c.," rejoined Baxter, "you would have seen just reason given for our dissent from the ecclesiastical hierarchy as established in England. You would easily grant that dioceses are too great, if you had ever conscionably tried the task which Dr. Hammond describeth as the bishop's work, or had ever believed Ignatius' and others' ancient descriptions of a bishop's church." Whither this war of words was tending, no bystander could doubt. To maintain the splendour and the powers of Episcopacy, to yield nothing, and yet to avoid the appearance of a direct breach of the royal word, was so glaringly the object of the court, that wilful blindness only could fail to penetrate the transparent veil of "The declaration" framed by Clarendon with all the astuteness of his profession, and accepted by the Presbyterians, with the eagerness of expiring hope. Baxter was not so deceived. In common with the other heads of his party, he judged the faith of Charles an inadequate security, and refused the proffered mitre of Hereford as an insidious bribe.

There were abundant reasons for this distrust. Thanks for his gracious purposes in favour of the nonconformists had been presented to the head of the church by the House of Commons, who immediately afterwards, at the instance of his majesty's secretary of state, rejected the very measure which had kindled their gratitude. Three months had scarcely passed since the declaration had issued, when an order in council proclaimed the illegality of all religious meetings held without the walls of the parochial churches. The Book of Common Prayer and the Statute-book were daily cementing their alliance, the one enlarged by a supplication for "grace carefully and studiously to imitate the example of the blessed saint and martyr" who had now attained the honours of canonization; the other requiring the officers of all corporate and port towns "to take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper;" and to swear "that it is not lawful, upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the king," or against "those commissioned by him."

Amidst these parliamentary thunders were opened the conferences of the Savoy, which were to reduce to a definite meaning the declarations of Breda and of Whitehall. It was the scene of Baxter's triumph and defeat—the triumph of his promptitude, subtlety, and boundless resource—the defeat of the last hope he was permitted to indulge, of peace to himself or to the church of which he was then the brightest ornament. The tactics of popular assemblies form a system of licensed deceit; and their conventional morality tolerates the avowal of the skill by which the antagonist party has been overreached, and even an open exultation in the success of such contrivances. To embarrass the Presbyterians by the course of the discussion, to invent plausible pretexts for delay, and to guide the controversy to an impotent, if not a ludicrous close, were the scarcely concealed objects of the Episcopalians. Opposed to these by the feebler party were the contrivances by which weakness usually seeks to evade the difficulties it cannot stem, and the captiousness which few can restrain when overborne by the superior force of numbers or of authority.

Whoever has seen a Parliament, may easily imagine a synod. Baxter was the leader of an unpopular opposition,—the Charles Fox of the Savoy, of which Morley was the William Pitt, and Gunning the Henry Dundas. To review the Book of Common Prayer, and "to advise and consult upon the same, and the several objections and exceptions which shall be raised against the same," was the task assigned by Charles to twelve bishops, nine doctors of divinity, and twenty-one Presbyterian divines.

Exalted by the acclamation of the whole Episcopalian party to the head of all human writings, not without some doubts whether it should not rather class with those of the sacred canon, the Book of Common Prayer was pronounced by the bishops, at the opening of the conferences, to be exempt from any errors which they could detect, and incapable of any improvements which they could suggest. They could not therefore advance to the encounter until their antagonists should have unrolled the long catalogue of their hostile criticisms and projected amendments. From such a challenge it was not in Baxter's nature to shrink, though warned by his associates of the motives by which it was dictated, and of the dangers to which it would lead. "Bishop Sheldon," says Burnet, "saw well enough what the effect would be of obliging them to make all their demands at once, that the number would raise a mighty outcry against them as a people that could never be satisfied." In fourteen days Baxter prepared a new liturgy. In a few more he had completed his objections to the former rubric, with an humble petition for peace and indulgence. Fast and thick flew over the field the missiles of theological thesis before the closer conflict of oral debate. This was waged in high dialectic latitudes. Take the following example:—"That command" (we quote the Episcopalian *proponitur*) "which enjoins only an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby an unjust penalty is enjoined, or any circumstance whence directly or *per accidens* any sin is consequent, which the commander ought to provide against, hath in it all things requisite to the lawfulness of a command, and particularly cannot be charged with enjoining an act *per accidens* unlawful, nor of commanding an act under an unjust penalty." As an Indian listens to the war-cry of a hostile tribe, Baxter heard the announcement of this heretical doctrine, and plunged headlong into the fight. Pouring fourth his boundless stores of metaphysical, moral, and scholastic speculation, he alternately plunged and soared beyond the reach of ordinary vision—distinguished and qualified, quoted and subtilized, till his voice was drowned "in noise and confusion, and high reflections on his dark and cloudy imagination." Bishop Sanderson, the moderator, adjudged the palm of victory to his opponent. "Baxter and Gunning" (the words are Burnet's) "spent several days in logical arguing, to the diversion of the town, who looked upon them as a couple of fencers engaged in a dispute that could not be brought to any end." It had, however, reached the only end which the king and his advisers had ever contemplated. An apology had been made for the breach of the royal promise. Henceforth the Presbyterians might be denounced as men whom reason could not convince, and who were therefore justly given up to the coercion of penal laws. To cast on them a still deeper shade of contumacy, some few trifling changes were made in the rubric by the convocation. The church was required to celebrate the martyrdom of the first Charles, and the restoration of the second,—that "most religious and gracious king," (the last epithet with which in the same sentence the monarch was complimented and the Deity invoked;) and, as if still more certainly to exclude from her pale those who had sued in vain for entrance, Bel and the dragon, and other worthies of the apocrypha, were now called to take their stations in her weekly services.

Had Charles been permitted to follow the dictates of his own easy nature, or of his religious predilections, he would (though for precisely opposite reasons) have emulated the zeal of Cromwell for liberty of conscience. He would gladly have secured that freedom to his Roman Catholic subjects; and would still more gladly have relieved himself from the trouble of persecuting the Protestant dissenters. But the time was still unripe for such hazardous experiments. At the dictation of Clarendon, he was made to assure his Parliament that he was "as much in love with the Book of Common Prayer as they could wish, and had prejudices enough against those who did not love it." Within two years from his return, the depth and sincerity of this affection were attested by the imprisonment of more than four thousand Quakers, and by the promulgation of the act of uniformity. Among the two thousand clergymen whom this law excluded from the church, Baxter was on every account the most conspicuous. He had refused the bishopric of Hereford, and the united interest of Charles and Clarendon had been exerted in vain (so with most elaborate hypocrisy it was pretended) to recover for him a curacy at Kidderminster. He for ever quitted that scene of his apostolic labours; and in the forty-seventh year of his age, bowed down with bodily infirmities, was driven from his home and his weeping congregation, to pass the remainder of his life in loathsome jails or precarious hiding-places; there to achieve, in penury and almost ceaseless pain, works without a parallel in the history of English theological literature, for their extent, or their prodigality of mental resources.

Solitude was not among the aggravations of his lot. Margaret Charlton was a lady of gentle birth, rich in the gifts of nature and of fortune. She dwelt in her mother's house at Kidderminster, where both parent and child found in Baxter their teacher and spiritual guide. "In her youth, pride and romances, and company suitable thereto, did take her up." But sickness came, and he ministered to her anxieties; and health returned, and he led the thanksgiving of the congregation; and there were mental conflicts in which he sustained her, and works of mercy in which he directed her, and notes were made of his sermons, and passages were transcribed from his consolatory letters, and gradually—but who needs to be told the result? Margaret was no ordinary woman. Her "strangely vivid wit" is celebrated by the admirable John Howe; and her widowed husband, in "The breviate of her life," has drawn a portrait the original of which it would have been criminal not to love. Timid, gentle, and reserved, and nursed amidst all the luxuries of her age, her heart was the abode of affections so intense, and of a fortitude so enduring, that her meek spirit, impatient of one selfish wish, progressively acquired all the heroism of benevolence, and seemed at length incapable of one selfish fear. In prison, in sickness, in evil report, in every form of danger and fatigue, she was still with unabated cheerfulness at the side of him to whom she had pledged her conjugal faith;—prompting him to the discharge of every duty, calming the asperities of his temper, his associate in unnumbered acts of philanthropy, embellishing his humble home by the little arts with which a cultivated mind imparts its own gracefulness to the meanest dwelling-place; and during the nineteen years of their union joining with him in one unbroken strain of filial affiance to the Divine mercy, and of a grateful adoration for the Divine goodness. Her tastes and habits had been moulded into a perfect conformity to his. He celebrates her Catholic charity to the opponents of their religious opinions, and her inflexible adherence to her own; her high esteem of the active and passive virtues of the Christian life, as contrasted with a barren orthodoxy: her noble disinterestedness, her skill in casuistry, her love of music, and her medicinal arts. Peace be to the verses which he poured out not to extol but to animate her devotion. If Margaret was wooed in strains over which Sacharissa would have slumbered, Baxter's uncouth rhymes have a charm which Waller's lyrics cannot boast—the charm of purity, and reverence, and truth. The Eloise of Abelard, and the Eloise of Rousseau, revealing but too accurately one of the dark chambers of the human heart, have poisoned the imagination, and rendered it difficult to conceive of such ties as those which first drew together the souls of the nonconformist minister and his pupil;—he approaching his fiftieth and she scarcely past her twentieth year; he stricken with penury, disease, and persecution, and she in the enjoyment of affluence and of the world's alluring smiles. It was not in the reign of Charles the Second, that wit or will were wanting to ridicule, or to upbraid such espousals. Grave men sighed over the weakness of the venerable divine; and gay men disported themselves with so effective an incident in the tragi-comedy of life. Much had the great moralist written upon the benefits of clerical celibacy; for, "when he said so, he thought that he should die a bachelor." Something he wrote as follows, in defence of his altered opinions:—"The unsuitableness of our age, and my former known purposes against marriage and against the conveniency of minister's marriage, who have no sort of necessity, made our marriage the matter of much talk;" but he most judiciously proceeds, "the true opening of her case and mine, and the many strange occurrences which brought it to pass, would take away the wonder of her friends and mine that knew us, and the notice of it would conduce to the understanding of some other passages of our lives. Yet wise friends, by whom I am advised, think it better to omit such personal particularities at this time. Both in her case and in mine there was much extraordinary, which it doth not much concern the world to be acquainted with." Under this apology, it veiled the fact that Margaret herself first felt, or first betrayed the truth, that a sublunary affection had blended itself with their devotional feelings; and that she encouraged him to claim that place in her heart which the holiest of human beings has still left for mere human sympathy. It was an attachment hallowed on either side by all that can give dignity to the passions to which all are alike subject. To her it afforded the daily delight of supporting in his gigantic labours, and of soothing in his unremitted cares, a husband who repaid her tenderness with unceasing love and gratitude. To him it gave a friend whose presence was tranquillity, who tempered by her milder wisdom, and graced by her superior elegance, and exalted by her more confiding piety, whatever was austere, or rude, or distrustful in his rugged character. After all, it must be confessed that the story will not fall handsomely to any niche in the chronicles of romance; though, even in that light, Crabbe or Marmontel would have made something of it. Yet, unsupported by any powers of narrative, it is a tale which will never want its interest, so long as delight shall be felt in contemplating the submission of the sternest and most powerful minds to that kindly influence which cements and blesses, and which should ennoble human society.

Over the declining years of Baxter's life, friendship, as well as conjugal love, threw a glow of consolation which no man ever needed or ever valued more. His affectionate record of his associates has rescued some of their names from oblivion. Such is the case with "good old Simon Ash, who went seasonably to heaven at the very time he was to be cast out of the church; who, having a good estate, and a very good wife, inclined to entertainments and a liberality, kept a house much frequented by ministers, where, always cheerful, without profuse laughter, or levity, and never troubled with doubtings," he imparted to others the gayety of his own heart, and died as he had lived, "in great consolation and cheerful exercise of faith, molested with no fears or doubts, exceedingly glad of the company of his friends, and greatly encouraging all about him." Such also was "good Mr. James Walton, commonly called the weeping prophet; of a most holy blameless life, and, though learned, greatly averse to controversy and dispute;" a man who had struggled successfully against constitutional melancholy, until troubled with the sad case of the church and the multitude of ministers cast out, and at his own unserviceableness, he consumed to death."

To the Democritus and Heraclitus of nonconformity, a far greater name succeeds in the catalogue of Baxter's friends. In the village of Acton, Sir Matthew Hale had found an occasional retreat from the cares of his judicial life; and devoted his leisure to science and theology, and to social intercourse with the ejected nonconformist. In an age of civil strife, he had proposed to himself the example of Atticus, and, like that accomplished person, endeavoured to avert the enmity of the contending parties by the fearless discharge of his duties to all, without ministering to the selfish ends of any. The frugal simplicity of his habits, his unaffected piety and studious pursuits, enabled him to keep this hazardous path with general esteem, though he was more indebted for safety to his unrivalled eminence as a lawyer and a judge. Though Cromwell and Ludlow rebelled against the papal authority of Westminster Hall, their age lagged far behind them. In the overthrow of all other institutions, the courts in which Fortescue and Coke had explained or invented the immemorial customs of England, were still the objects of universal veneration; and the supremacy of the law secured to its sages the homage of the people. Never was it rendered more justly than to Hale. With the exception of Roger North, we remember no historian of that day who does not bear an unqualified testimony to his uprightness, to the surpassing compass of his professional learning, and the exquisite skill with which it was employed. That agreeable, though most prejudiced writer, refuses him not only this, but the still higher praise of spotless patriotism, and ridicules his pretensions as a philosopher and divine. Baxter, an incomparably better judge, thought far otherwise. In the learning in which he himself excelled all others, he assigned a high station to Hale: and has recorded that his "conference, mostly about the immortality of the soul and other philosophical and foundation points, was so edifying, that his very questions and objections did help me to more light than other men's solutions." Differing on those subjects which then agitated society, their minds, enlarged by nobler contemplations, rose far above the controversies of their age; and were united in efforts for their mutual improvement, and for advancing the interests of religion, truth, and virtue. It was a grave and severe, but an affectionate friendship; such as can subsist only between men who have lived in the habitual restraint of their lower faculties, and in the strenuous culture of those powers which they believe to be destined hereafter, and to be ripening now, for an indefinite expansion and an immortal existence.

From such intercourse Baxter was rudely called away. Not satisfied with the rigid uniformity of professed belief and external observances amongst the clergy of the established church, Parliament had denounced a scale of penalties, graduated from fine, to banishment to the plantations, against laics who should attend any other form of religious worship, even in private houses, where more than five strangers should be present. At Acton, a personage of no mean importance watched over the ecclesiastical discipline of the parish. "Dr. Ryves, rector of that church and of Hadley, dean of Windsor and of Wolverhampton, and chaplain in ordinary to the king," could not patiently endure the irregularities of his learned neighbour. The dean indeed officiated by deputy, and his curate was a raw and ignorant youth; and Baxter (an occasional conformist) was a regular attendant on all the sacred offices. But he refused the Oxford oath, and at his domestic worship there were sometimes found more than the statutable addition to the family circle. Such offences demanded *expiation. He was* committed to Clerkenwell jail, and, when at length discharged from it, was compelled to seek a new and more hospitable residence. He had his revenge. It was to obtain, through the influence of one of his most zealous disciples, the charter which incorporates the Church of England Society for the Propagation of the Gospel—a return of good for evil for which his name might well displace those of some of the saints in the calendar.

While the plague was depopulating London, and the silenced clergymen were discharging the unenvied office of watching over the multitude appointed to death, the king and Clarendon, at a secure distance from the contagion, were employed in framing the statute which denounced the most rigid punishment against any nonconformist minister who should approach within five miles of any town in England, or of any parish in which he had formerly officiated. Totteridge, a hamlet, round which a circle of ten miles in diameter could be drawn without including any of the residences thus proscribed to Baxter, became his next abode, but was not permitted to be a place of security or rest. His indefatigable pen had produced a paraphrase on the New Testament, where the keen scrutiny of his enemies detected libels, to be refuted only by the logic of the court and prison of the King's Bench. From the records of that court, Mr. Orme has extracted the indictment, which sets forth, that "Richardus Baxter, persona seditiosa et factiosa, pravæ mentis, impiæ, inquietæ, turbulent' disposition' et conversation';"—"falso, illicite, injuste, nequit', factiose, seditiose, et irreligiose, fecit, composuit, scripsit quendam falsum, seditiosum, libellosum, factiosum, et irreligiosum librum." The classical pleader proceeds in a vein of unconscious humour to justify these hard words by the use of the figure called, we believe, a "*scilicet*" by those who now inhabit the ancient abode of the Knights Templars. "It is folly," says the paraphrase, "to doubt whether there be devils, while devils incarnate dwell amongst us here," (clericos pred' hujus regni Angl' innuendo.) "What else but devils could make ceremonious hypocrites,' (clericos pred' innuendo:) "men that preach in Christ's name,' (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo) "therefore, are not to be silenced if they do no more harm than good. Dreadful then is the case of men," (episcopos et ministros justitiæ infr' hujus regni Angl' innuendo) "that silence Christ's faithful ministers," (seipsum R. B. et al' seditiosas et factiosas person' innuendo.)

Ansley and George Stevens were dull fellows compared with the great originals from which they drew. L'Estrange himself might have taken a lesson in the art of defamation, from this innuendoing special pleader. But the absurdity was crowned by the conduct of the trial. Abhorrence, disgust, indignation, and all other feelings of the sterner kind, gave way to the irresistible sense of the ludicrous, in some parts of the judicial career of Jeffries; and "to be grave exceeds all powers of face," in reading the narrative of this proceeding, which was drawn up by one of the spectators.

The judge entered the court with his face flaming, "he snorted and squeaked, blew his nose and clenched his hands, and lifted up his eyes, mimicking their manner, and running on furiously, as he said they used to pray." The ermined buffoon extorted a smile from the nonconformists themselves. Pollexfen, the leading counsel for the defence, gave into the humour, and attempted to gain attention for his argument by a jest. "My lord," he said, "some will think it a hard measure to stop these men's mouths, and not to let them speak through their noses." "Pollexfen," said Jeffries, "I know you well. You are the patron of the faction; this is an old rogue who has poisoned the world, with his Kidderminster doctrine. He encouraged all the women to bring their bodkins and thimbles, to carry on the war against their king, of ever-blessed memory. An old schismatical knave—a hypocritical villain." "My lord," replied the counsel, "Mr. Baxter's loyal and peaceable spirit, King Charles would have rewarded with a bishopric, when he came in, if he would have conformed." "Ay," said the judge, "we know that; but what ailed the old blockhead, the unthankful villain, that he would not conform? Is he wiser or better than other men? He hath been, ever since, the spring of the faction. I am sure he hath poisoned the world with his linsey-woolsey doctrine, a conceited—stubborn, fanatical dog." After one counsel, and another, had been overborne by the fury of Jeffries, Baxter himself took up the argument. "My lord," he said, "I have been so moderate with respect to the Church of England, that I have incurred the censure of many of the dissenters on that account." "Baxter for bishops," exclaimed the judge, "is a merry conceit indeed. Turn to it, turn to it!" On this one of the counsel turned to a passage in the libel, which stated, that "great respect is due to those truly called bishops amongst us. "Ay," said Jeffries, "this is your Presbyterian cant, *truly* called to be bishops; that is of himself and such rascals, called the bishops of Kidderminster, and other such places. The bishops set apart by such factious—snivelling Presbyterians as himself; a Kidderminster bishop he means, according to the saying of a late learned author, every parish shall maintain a tythe-pig metropolitan." Baxter offering to speak again, Jeffries exploded in the following apostrophe: "Richard! Richard! dost thou think here to poison the court? Richard, thou art an old fellow—an old knave; thou hast written books enough to load a cart, every one as full of sedition, I might say treason, as an egg is full of meat. Hadst thou been whipped out of thy writing trade forty years ago, it had been happy. I know that thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of the brotherhood in corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty don, and a doctor of your party at your elbow; but I will crush you all. Come, what do you say for yourself, you old knave—come, speak up; what doth he say? I am not afraid of him, or of all the snivelling calves you have got about you,"—alluding to some persons who were in tears at this scene. "Your lordship need not," said Baxter, "for I'll not hurt you. But these things will surely be understood one day; what fools one sort of Protestants are made, to prosecute the other." Then lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said, "I am not concerned to answer such stuff, but am ready to produce my writings, in confutation of all this; and my life and conversation are known to many in this nation."

The jury returned a verdict of guilty, and but for the resistance of the other judges, Jeffries would have added whipping through the city to the sentence of imprisonment. It was to continue until the prisoner should have paid five hundred marks. Baxter was at that time in his 70th year. A childless widower, groaning under the agonies of bodily pain, and reduced by former persecutions to sell all that he possessed; he entered the King's Bench prison in utter poverty, and remained there for nearly two years, hopeless of any other abode on earth. But the hope of a mansion of eternal peace and love raised him beyond the reach of human tyranny. He possessed his soul in patience. Wise and good men resorted to his prison, and brought back greetings to his distant friends, and maxims of piety and prudence. Happy in the review of a well-spent life, and still happier in the prospect of its early close, his spirit enjoyed a calm for which his enemies might have well exchanged their mitres and their thrones. His pen, the faithful companion of his troubles, as of his joys, still plied the Herculean tasks which habit had rendered not merely easy, but delightful to him; and what mattered the gloomy walls or the obscene riot of a jail, while he was free to wander from early dawn to nightfall over the sublime heights of devotion, or through the interminable, but to him not pathless wilderness of psychology? There pain and mortal sickness were unheeded, and his long-lost wife forgotten, or remembered only that he might rejoice in their approaching reunion. The altered policy of the court restored him for awhile to the questionable advantage of bodily freedom. "At this time," says the younger Calamy, "he talked about another world like one that had been there, and was come as an express from thence to make a report concerning it." But age, sickness, and persecution had done their work. His material frame gave way to the pressure of disease, though, in the language of one of his last associates, "his soul abode rational, strong in faith and hope," That his dying hours were agitated by the doubts which had clouded his earlier days, has been often but erroneously asserted. With manly truth, he rejected, as affectation, the wish for death to which some pretend. He assumed no stoical indifference to pain, and indulged in no unhallowed familiarity on those awful subjects which occupy the thoughts of him whose eye is closing on sublunary things, and is directed to an instant eternity. In profound lowliness, with a settled reliance on the Divine Mercy, repeating at frequent intervals the prayer of the Redeemer, on whom his hopes reposed, and breathing out benedictions on those who encircled his dying bed, he passed away from a life of almost unequalled toil and suffering, to a new condition of existence, where he doubted not to enjoy that perfect conformity of the human to the Divine will, to which, during his three-score years and ten, it had been his ceaseless labour to attain.

The record of the solitary, rather than of the social hours of a man of letters, must form the staple of his biography, yet he must be a strenuous reader, who should be able, from his own knowledge, to prepare such a record of the fruits of Richard Baxter's solitude. After a familiarity of many years with his writings, it must be avowed, that of the one hundred and sixty-eight volumes comprised in the catalogue of his printed works, there are some which we have never seen, and many with which we can boast but a very slight acquaintance. These, however, are such as (to borrow a phrase from Mr. Hallam) have ceased to belong to men, and have become the property of moths. From the recesses of the library in Red Cross street, they lower in the sullen majority of the folio page, over the pigmies of this duodecimo generation; the expressive, though neglected monuments of occurrences, which can never lose their place, or their interest, in the history of theological literature.

The English Reformation produced no Luther, Calvin, Zuingle, or Knox—no man who imparted to the national mind the impress of his own character, or the heritage of his religious creed. Our reformers, Cranmer scarcely excepted, were statesmen rather than divines. Neither he, nor those more properly called the martyrs of the Church of England, ever attempted the stirring appeals to mankind at large, which awakened the echoes of the presses and the pulpits of Germany, Switzerland, and France. From the papal to the royal supremacy—from the legatine to the archiepiscopal power—from the Roman missal to the Anglican liturgy, the transition was easy, and, in many respects, not very perceptible. An ambidexter controversialist, the English church warred at once with the errors of Rome and of Geneva; until relenting towards her first antagonist, she turned the whole power of her arms against her domestic and more dreaded enemy. To the resources of piety, genius, and learning, were added less legitimate weapons; and the Puritans underwent confiscation, imprisonment, exile, compulsory silence, every thing, in short, except conviction. When the civil wars unloosed their tongues and gave freedom to their pens, they found themselves without any established standard of religious belief: every question debatable; and every teacher conscience-bound to take his share in the debate. Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, Seekers, Familists, Behmenists, and Quakers, were agreed only in cementing a firm alliance against their common enemies, the prelatists and papists. Those foes subdued, they turned against each other, some contending for supremacy, and some for toleration, but all for what they severally regarded or professed to regard as truth. Nor were theirs the polemics of the schools or the cloister. The war of religious opinion was accompanied by the roar of Cromwell's artillery—by the fall of *ancient dynasties*, and the growth of a military, though forbearing despotism. It was an age of deep earnestness. Frivolous and luxurious men had for awhile retreated to make way for impassioned and high-wrought spirits;—the interpreters at once of the ancient revelations and of the present judgments of Heaven, the monitors of an ungodly world, and the comforters of those who bent beneath the weight of national and domestic calamities. Such were that memorable race of authors to whom is given collectively the name of the Puritan divines; and such, above all the rest, was Richard Baxter. Intellectual efforts of such severity as his, relieved by not so much as one passing smile: public services of such extent, interrupted by no one recorded relaxation; thoughts so sleeplessly intent on those awful subjects, in the presence of which all earthly interests are annihilated, might seem a weight too vast for human endurance; as assuredly it forms an example which few would have the power, and fewer still the will, to imitate. His seventy-five years unbroken by any transient glance at gayety: his one hundred and sixty-eight volumes, where the fancy never disports herself; a mortal man absorbed in the solemn realities, and absolutely independent of all the illusions of life, appears like a fiction, and a dull one too. Yet it is an exact, and not an uninviting truth.

Never was the alliance of soul and body formed on terms of greater inequality than in Baxter's person. It was like the compact in the fable, where all the spoils and honours fall to the giant's share, while the poor dwarf puts up with all the danger and the blows. The mournful list of his chronic diseases renders almost miraculous the mental vigour which bore him through exertions resembling those of a disembodied spirit. But his ailments were such as, without affecting his nervous energy, gave repose to his animal appetites, and quenched the thirst for all the emoluments and honours of this sublunary state. Death, though delaying to strike, stood continually before him, ever quickening his attention to that awful presence, by approaching the victim under some new or varied aspect of disease. Under this influence he wrote, and spoke, and acted—a dying man, conversant with the living in all their pursuits, but taking no share in their worldly hopes and fugitive emotions. Every returning day was welcomed and improved, as though it were to be his last. Each sermon might be a farewell admonition to his auditory. The sheets which lay before him were rapidly filled with the first suggestions of his mind in the first words which offered; for to-morrow's sun might find him unable to complete the momentous task. All the graces and the negligences of composition were alike unheeded, for how labour as an artist when the voice of human applause might in a few short hours become inaudible! In Baxter, the characteristics of his age, and of his associates, were thus heightened by the peculiarities of his own physical and mental constitution. Their earnestness passed in him into a profound solemnity; their diligence into an unrelaxing intensity of employment; their disinterestedness into a fixed disdain of the objects for which other men contend. Even the episode of his marriage is in harmony with the rest. He renounced the property with which it would have encumbered him, and stipulated for the absolute command of his precarious and inestimable time. Had this singular concentration of thought and purpose befallen a man of quick sympathies, it would have overborne his spirits, if it had not impaired his reason. But Baxter was naturally stern. Had it overtaken a man of vivid imagination, it would have engendered a troop of fantastic and extravagant day-dreams. But to Baxter's natural vision all objects presented themselves with a hard outline, colourless, with no surrounding atmosphere. Had it been united to a cold and selfish heart, the result would have been a life of ascetic fanaticism. But his was an enlarged, though a calm philanthropy. His mind, though never averted from the remembrance of his own and of others' eternal doom, was still her own sovereign; diligently examining the foundations and determining the limits of belief; methodizing her opinions with painful accuracy, and expanding them into all their theoretical or practical results, as patiently as ever analyst explored the depths of the differential calculus. Still every thing was to the purpose. "I have looked," he says, "over Hutton, Vives, Erasmus, Scaliger, Salmasius, Cassaubon, and many other critical grammarians, and all Gruter's critical volumes. I have read almost all the physics and metaphysics I could hear of. I have wasted much of my time among loads of historians, chronologers, and antiquaries. I despise none of their learning—all truth is useful. Mathematics, which I have least of, I find a pretty and manlike sport; but if I have no other kind of knowledge than these, what were my understanding worth? What a dreaming dotard should I be? I have higher thoughts of the schoolmen than Erasmus and our other grammarians had. I much value the method and sobriety of Aquinas, the subtlety of Scotus and Ockum, the plainness of Durandus, the solidity of Ariminensis, the profundity of Bradwardine, the excellent acuteness of many of their followers; of Aureolus, Capreolus, Bannes, Alvarez, Zumel, &c.; of Mayro, Lychetus, Trombeta, Faber, Meurisse, Rada, &c.; of Ruiz, Pennattes, Saurez, Vasquez, &c.; of Hurtado, of Albertinus, of Lud à Dola, and many others. But how loath should I be to take such sauce for my food, and such recreations for my business. The jingling of too much and false philosophy among them often drowns the noise of Aaron's bells. I feel myself much better in Herbert's temple."

Within the precincts of that temple, and to the melody of those bells, he accordingly proceeded to erect the vast monument of his theological works. Their basis was laid in a series of "aphorisms on justification"—an attempt to fix the sense of the sacred volume on those topics which constitute the essential peculiarities of the Christian system. The assaults with which the aphorisms had been encountered were repelled by his "Apology," a large volume in quarto. The "Apology" was, within a few months, re-enforced by another quarto, entitled his "Confession of Faith." Between four and five hundred pages of "Disputations" came to the succour of the "Confession." Then appeared four treatises on the "Doctrine of Perseverance," on "Saving Faith," on "Justifying Righteousness," and on "Universal Redemption." Next in order is a folio of seven hundred pages, entitled "Catholic Theology," plain, pure, peaceable, unfolding and resolving all the controversies of the schoolmen, the papists and the Protestants. This was eclipsed by a still more ponderous folio in Latin, entitled, "Methodus Theologæ Christianæ," composed, to quote his own words. "in my retirement at Totteridge, in a troublesome, smoky, suffocating room, in the midst of daily pains of sciatica, and many worse." After laying down the nature of Deity, and all things in general, he discloses all the relations, eternal and historical, between God and man, with all the abstract truths, and all the moral obligations deducible from them;—detecting the universal presence of the trinity, not in the Divine Being only, but in all things psychological and material which flow from the great fountain of life. With an "End of Doctrinal Controversies," a title, he observes, not intended as a prognostic, but as didactical and corrective—terminated his efforts to close up the mighty questions which touch on man's highest hopes and interests. He had thrown upon them such an incredible multitude and variety of cross lights, as effectually to dazzle any intellectual vision less aquiline than his own.

His next enterprise was to win mankind to religious concord. A progeny of twelve books, most of them of considerable volume, attest his zeal to this arduous cause. Blessed, we are told, are the peacemakers; but the benediction is unaccompanied with the promise of tranquillity. He found, indeed, a patron in "His highness, Richard Lord Protector," whose rule he acknowledged as lawful, though he had denied the authority of his father. Addressing that wise and amiable man, "I observe," he says, "that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly, and made great wars." Stronger minds and less gentle hearts than that of Richard repelled with natural indignation counsels which rebuked all the contending parties. Amongst these was "one Malpas, an old scandalous minister," "and Edward Bagshawe, a young man who had written formerly against monarchy, and afterwards against Bishop Morley, and being of a resolute Roman spirit, was sent first to the Tower, and then lay in a horrid dungeon;" and who wrote a book "full of untruths, which the furious temerarious man did utter out of the rashness of his mind." In his dungeon, poor Bagshawe died, and Baxter closes the debate with tenderness and pathos. "While we wrangle here in the dark, we are dying, and passing to the world that will decide all our controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness." Dr. Owen, one of the foremost in the first rank of divines of his age, had borne much; but these exhortations to concord he could not bear; and he taught his monitor, that he who undertakes to reconcile enemies must be prepared for the loss of friends. It was on every account a desperate endeavour. Baxter was opposed to every sect, and belonged to none. He can be properly described only as a Baxterian—at once the founder and the single disciple of an eclectic school, within the portals of which he invited all men, but persuaded none, to take refuge from their mutual animosities.

Had Baxter been content merely to establish truth, and to decline the refutation of error, many might have listened to a voice so earnest, and to counsels so profound. But, "while he spoke to them of peace, he made him ready for battle." Ten volumes, many of them full-grown quartos, vindicated his secession from the Church of England. Five other batteries, equally well served, were successively opened against the Antinomians, the Quakers, the Baptists, the Millenarians, and the Grotians. The last, of whom Dodwell was the leader, typified, in the reign of Charles, the divines who flourish at Oxford in the reign of Victoria. Long it were, and not very profitable, to record the events of these theological campaigns. They brought into the field Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and Dodwell. The men of learning were aided by the men of wit. Under the *nom de guerre* of "Tilenus Junior," Womack, the bishop of St. David's, had incurred Baxter's censure for his "abusive, virulent accusations of the synod of Dort." To this attack appeared an answer, entitled, "The Examination of Tilenus before the Triers, in order to his intended settlement in the office of a public preacher in the commonwealth of Utopia." Among the jurors empannelled for the trial of Tilenus, are "Messrs. Absolute," "Fatality," "Preterition," "Narrow Grace, *alias* Stint Grace," "Take o' Trust," "Know Little," and "Dubious,"—the last the established sobriquet for Richard Baxter. But neither smile nor sigh could be extorted from the veteran polemic; nor, in truth, had he much right to be angry. If not with equal pleasantry, he had with at least equal freedom, invented appellations for his opponents;—designating Dodwell, or his system, as "Leviathan, absolute, destructive Prelacy, the son of Abaddon, Apollyon, and not of Jesus Christ." Statesmen joined in the affray. Morice, Charles's first secretary of state, contributed a treatise; and Lauderdale, who, with all his faults, was an accomplished scholar, and amidst all his inconsistencies, a stanch Presbyterian, accepted the dedication of one of Baxter's controversial pieces, and presented him with twenty guineas. The unvarying kindness to the persecuted nonconformist of one who was himself a relentless persecutor, is less strange than the fact, that the future courtier of Charles read, during his imprisonment at Windsor, the whole of Baxter's then published works, and, as their grateful author records, remembered them better than himself. While the pens of the wise, the witty, and the great, were thus employed against the universal antagonist, the Quakers assailed him with their tongues. Who could recognise, in the gentle and benevolent people who now bear that name, a trace of their ancestral character, of which Baxter has left the following singular record? "The Quakers in their shops, when I go along London streets, say, alas! poor man, thou art yet in darkness. They have often come to the congregation, when I had liberty to preach Christ's gospel, and cried out against me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the streets, 'the day of the Lord is coming, and thou shalt perish as a deceiver.' They have stood in the market-place, and under my window, year after year, crying to the people, 'take heed of your priests, they deceive your souls;' and if any one wore a lace or neat clothing, they cried out to me, 'these are the fruits of your ministry.'"

Against the divorce of divinity and politics, Baxter vehemently protested, as the putting asunder of things which a sacred ordinance had joined together. He therefore published a large volume, entitled "The Holy Commonwealth; a Plea for the cause of Monarchy, but as under God the Universal Monarch." Far better to have roused against himself all the quills which had ever bristled on all the "fretful porcupines" of theological strife. For, while vindicating the ancient government of England, he hazarded a distinct avowal of opinions, which, with their patrons, were to be proscribed with the return of the legitimate sovereign. He taught that the laws of England are above the king; that Parliament was his highest court, where his personal will and word were not sufficient authority. He vindicated the war against Charles, and explained the apostolical principle of obedience to the higher powers as extending to the senate as well as to the emperor. The royal power had been given "for the common good, and no cause could warrant the king to make the commonwealth the party which he should exercise hostility against." All this was published at the moment of the fall of Richard Cromwell. Amidst the multitude of answers which it provoked may be especially noticed those of Harrington, the author of the "Oceana," and of Edward Pettit. "The former," says Baxter, "seemed in a Bethlehem rage, for, by way of scorn, he printed half a sheet of foolish jests, in such words as idiots or drunkards use, railing at ministers as a pack of fools and knaves, and, by his gibberish derision, persuading men that we deserve no other answer than such scorn and nonsense as beseemeth fools. With most insolent pride, he carried it as neither I nor any ministers understood at all what policy was; but prated against we knew not what, and had presumed to speak against other men's art which he was master of, and his knowledge, to such idiots as we, incomprehensible." Pettit placed Baxter in hell, where Bradshawe acts as president, and Hobbes and Neville strive in vain for the crown which he awards to the nonconformist for pre-eminence of evil and mischief on earth. "Let him come in," exclaims the new Rhadamanthus, "and be crowned with wreaths of serpents, and chaplets of adders. Let his triumphant chariot be a pulpit drawn on the wheels of cannon by a brace of wolves in sheep's clothing. Let the ancient fathers of the Church, whom out of ignorance he has vilified; the reverend and learned prelates, whom out of pride and malice he has belied, abused, and persecuted; the most righteous king, whose murder he has justified—let them all be bound in chains to attend his infernal triumph to his 'Saint's Everlasting Rest;' then make room, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites, atheists, and politicians, for the greatest rebel on earth, and next to him that fell from heaven." Nor was this all. The "Holy Commonwealth" was amongst the books which the University of Oxford sentenced to the flames which had been less innocently kindled at the same place in a former generation, against the persons of men who had dared to proclaim unwelcome truths. Morley and many others branded it as treason; and the king was taught to regard the author as one of the most inveterate enemies of the royal authority. South joined in the universal clamour; and Baxter, in his autobiography, records, that when that great wit and author had been called to preach before the king, and a vast congregation drawn together by his high celebrity, he was compelled, after a quarter of an hour, to desist, and to retire from the pulpit exclaiming, "the Lord be merciful to our infirmities!" The sermon, which should have been recited, was afterwards published, and it appeared that the passage at which South's presence of mind had failed him, was an invective against the "Holy Commonwealth." After enduring for ten years the storm which his book had provoked, Baxter took the very singular course of publishing a revocation, desiring the world to consider it as *non scriptum*;—maintaining the while the general principles of his work, and "protesting against the judgment of posterity, and all others that were not of the same time and place, as to the mental censure either of the book or revocation, as being ignorant of the true reasons of them both." We, therefore, who, for the present, constitute the posterity, against whose rash judgment this protest was entered, should be wary in censuring what, it must be confessed, is not very intelligible, except, indeed, as it is not difficult to perceive, motives enough for retreating from an unprofitable strife, even though the retreat could not be very skilfully accomplished.

Two volumes of Ecclesiastical History, the first a quarto of five hundred pages, the second a less voluminous vindication of its predecessor, attest the extent of Baxter's labours in this department of theological literature, and the stupendous compass of his reading. The authorities he enumerates, and from a diligent study of which his work is drawn, would form a considerable library.

Such labours as those we have mentioned, might seem to have left no vacant space in a life otherwise so actively employed. But these books, and the vast mass of unpublished manuscripts, are not the most extensive, as they are incomparably the least valuable, of the produce of his solitary hours.

With the exception of Grotius, Baxter is the first of that long series of writers who have undertaken to establish the truth of Christianity, by a systematic exhibition of the evidence and the arguments in favour of the divine origin of our faith. All homage to their cause, for we devoutly believe it to be the cause of truth! Be it acknowledged that their labours could not have been declined, without yielding a temporary and dangerous triumph to sophistry and presumptuous ignorance. Admit (as indeed it is scarcely possible to exaggerate) their boundless superiority to their antagonists in learning, in good faith, in sagacity, in range and depth of thought, and in whatever else was requisite in this momentous controversy;—concede, as for ourselves we delight to confess, that they have advanced their proofs to the utmost heights of probability which by such reasonings it is possible to scale;—with these concessions may not inconsistently be combined some distaste for these inquiries, and some doubt of their real value.

The sacred writers have none of the timidity of their modern apologists. They never sue for an assent to their doctrines, but authoritatively command the acceptance of them. They denounce unbelief as guilt, and insist on faith as a virtue of the highest order. In their Catholic invitations, the intellectual not less than the social distinctions of mankind are unheeded. Every student of their writings is aware of these facts; but the solution of them is less commonly observed. It is, we apprehend, that the apostolic authors assume the existence in all men of a spiritual discernment, enabling the mind, when unclouded by appetite or passion, to recognise and distinguish the Divine voice, whether uttered from within by the intimations of conscience, or speaking from without in the language of inspired oracles. They presuppose that vigour of understanding may consist with feebleness of reason; and that the power of discriminating between religious truths and error does not chiefly depend on the culture, or on the exercise of the mere argumentative faculty. The especial patrimony of the poor and illiterate—the gospel—has been the stay of countless millions who never framed a syllogism. Of the great multitudes whom no man can number, who before and since the birth of Grotius have lived in the peace, and died in the consolations of our faith, how incomparably few are they whose convictions have been derived from the study of works like his! Of the numbers who have addicted themselves to such studies, how small is the proportion of those who have brought to the task either learning, or leisure, or industry sufficient to enable them to form an independent judgment on the questions in debate! Called to the exercise of a judicial function for which he is but ill prepared—addressed by pleadings on an issue where his prepossessions are all but unalterable, bidden to examine evidences which he has most rarely the skill, the learning, or the leisure to verify, and pressed by arguments, sometimes overstrained, and sometimes fallacious—he who lays the foundations of his faith in such "evidences" will but too commonly end either in yielding a credulous, and therefore an infirm assent, or by reposing in a self-sufficient and far more hazardous incredulity.

For these reasons, we attach less value to the long series of Baxter's works in support of the foundations of the Christian faith than to the rest of his books which have floated in safety down the tide of time to the present day. Yet it would be difficult to select, from the same class of writings, any more eminently distinguished by the earnest love and the fearless pursuit of truth; or to name an inquirer into these subjects who possessed and exercised to a greater extent the power of suspending his long-cherished opinions, and of closely interrogating every doubt by which they were obstructed.

In his solicitude to sustain the conclusions he had so laboriously formed, Baxter unhappily invoked the aid of arguments, which, however impressive in his own days, are answered in ours by a smile, if not by a sneer. The sneer, however, would be at once unmerited and unwise. When Hale was adjudging witches to death, and More preaching against their guilt, and Boyle investigating the sources of their power, it is not surprising that Baxter availed himself of the evidence afforded by witchcraft and apparitions in proof of the existence of a world of spirits; and therefore in support of one of the fundamental tenets of revealed religion. Marvellous, however, it is, in running over his historical discourse on that subject, to find him giving so unhesitating an assent to the long list of extravagances and nursery tales which he has there brought together; unsupported as they almost all are by any proof that such facts occurred at all, or by any decorous pretext for referring them to preternatural agency. Simon Jones, a stout-hearted and able-bodied soldier, standing sentinel at Worcester, was driven away from his post by the appearance of something like a headless bear. A drunkard was warned against intemperance by the lifting up of his shoes by an invisible hand. One of the witches condemned by Hale threw a girl into fits. Mr. Emlin, a bystander, "suddenly felt a force pull one of the hooks from his breeches, and, while he looked with wonder what had become of it, the tormented girl vomited it up out of her mouth." At the house of Mr. Beecham, there was a tobacco pipe which had the habit of "moving itself from a shelf at the one end of the room to a shelf at the other end of the room." When Mr. Munn, the minister, went to witness the prodigy, the tobacco pipe remained stationary; but a great Bible made a spontaneous leap into his lap, and opened itself at a passage, on the hearing of which the evil spirit who had possessed the pipe was exorcised. "This Mr. Munn himself told me, when in the sickness year, 1665, I lived in Stockerson hall. I have no reason to suspect the veracity of a sober man, a constant preacher, and a good scholar." Baxter was credulous and incredulous for precisely the same reason. Possessing by long habit a mastery over his thoughts, such as few other men ever acquired, *a single effort* of the will was sufficient to exclude from his view whatever recollections he judged hostile to his immediate purpose. Every prejudice was at once banished when any debatable point was to be scrutinized; and, with equal facility, every reasonable doubt was exiled when his only object was to enforce or illustrate a doctrine of the truth of which he was assured. The perfect submission of the will to the reason may belong to some higher state of being than ours. On mortal man that gift is not bestowed. In the best and the wisest, inclination will often grasp the reins by which she ought to be guided, and misdirect the judgment which she should obey. Happy they, who, like Baxter, have so disciplined the affections, as to disarm their temporary usurpation of all its more dangerous tendencies!

Controversies are ephemeral. Ethics, metaphysics and political philosophy are doomed to an early death, unless when born of genius and nurtured by intense and self-denying industry. Even the theologians of one age must, alas! too often disappear to make way for those of later times. But if there is an exception to the general decree which consigns man and his intellectual offspring to the same dull forgetfulness, it is in favour of such writings as those which fill the four folio volumes bearing the title of "Baxter's Practical Works." Their appearance in twenty-three smart octavos is nothing short of a profanation. Hew down the Pyramids into a range of streets, divide Niagara into a succession of water privileges, but let not the spirits of the mighty dead be thus evoked from their majestic shrines to animate the dwarfish structures of our bookselling generation. Deposit one of those gray folios on a resting-place equal to that venerable burden, then call up the patient and serious thoughts which its very aspect should inspire, and confess that, among the writings of uninspired men, there are none better fitted to awaken, to invigorate, to enlarge, or to console the mind, which can raise itself to such celestial colloquy. True, they abound in undistinguishable distinctions; the current of emotion, when flowing most freely, is but too often obstructed by metaphysical rocks and shallows, or diverted from its course into some dialectic winding; one while the argument is obscured by fervent expostulation; at another the passion is dried up by the analysis of the ten thousand springs of which it is compounded; here is a maze of subtleties to be unravelled, and there a crowd of the obscurely learned to be refuted; the unbroken solemnity may shed some gloom on the traveller's path, and the length of the way may now and then entice him to slumber. But where else can be found an exhibition, at once so vivid and so chaste, of the diseases of the human heart—a detection so fearfully exact, of the sophistries of which we are first the voluntary and then the unconscious victims—a light thrown with such intensity on the madness and the wo of every departure from the rules of virtue—a development of those rules so comprehensive and so elevated—counsels more shrewd or more persuasive—or a proclamation more consolatory of the resources provided by Christianity for escaping the dangers by which we are surrounded—of the eternal rewards she promises—or of the temporal blessings she imparts, as an earnest and a foretaste of them? "*Largior hic campis æther.*" Charles, and Laud, and Cromwell are forgotten. We have no more to do with antipædobaptism or prelacy. L'Estrange and Morley disturb not this higher region; but man and his noblest pursuits—Deity, in the highest conceptions of his attributes which can be extracted from the poor materials of human thought—the world we inhabit divested of the illusions which insnare us—the word to which we look forward bright with the choicest colours of hope—the glorious witnesses, and the Divine Guide and Supporter of our conflict —throng, animate, and inform every crowded page. In this boundless repository, the intimations of inspired wisdom are pursued into all their bearings on the various conditions and exigencies of life, with a fertility which would inundate and overpower the most retentive mind, had it not been balanced by a method and a discrimination even painfully elaborate. Through the vast accumulation of topics, admonitions, and inquiries, the love of truth is universally conspicuous. To every precept is appended the limitations it seems to demand. No difficulty is evaded. Dogmatism is never permitted to usurp the province of argument. Each equivocal term is curiously defined, and each plausible doubt narrowly examined. Not content to explain the results he has reached, he exhibits the process by which they were excogitated, and lays open all the secrets of his mental laboratory. And a wondrous spectacle it is. Calling to his aid an extent of theological and scholastic lore sufficient to equip a whole college of divines, and moving beneath the load with unencumbered freedom, he expatiates and rejoices in all the intricacies of his way—now plunging into the deepest thickets of casuistic and psychological speculation—and then emerging from them to resume his chosen task of probing the conscience, by remonstrances from which there is no escape—or of quickening the sluggish feelings by strains of exalted devotion.

That expostulations and arguments of which almost all admit the justice, and the truth of which none can disprove, should fall so ineffectually on the ear, and so seldom reach the heart, is a phenomenon worthy of more than a passing notice, and meriting an inquiry of greater exactness than it usually receives, even from those who profess the art of healing our spiritual maladies. To resolve it "into the corruption of human nature," is but to change the formula in which the difficulty is proposed. To affirm that a corrupt nature always gives an undue preponderance to the present above the future, is untrue in fact; for some of our worst passions—avarice, for example, revenge, ambition, and the like—chiefly manifest their power in the utter disregard of immediate privations and sufferings, with a view to a supposed remote advantage. To represent the world as generally incredulous as to the reality of a retributive state, is to contradict universal experience, which shows how firmly that persuasion is incorporated with the language, habits, and thoughts of mankind;—manifesting itself most distinctly in those great exigencies of life, when disguise is the least practicable. To refer to an external spiritual agency, determining the will to a wise or a foolish choice, is only to reproduce the original question in another form—what is that structure or mechanism of the human mind by means of which such influences operate to control or guide our volitions? The best we can throw out as an answer to the problem is, that the constitution of our frames, partly sensitive and partly rational, and corresponding with this the condition of our sublunary existence, pressed by animal as well as by spiritual wants, condemns us to a constant oscillation between the sensual and the divine, between the propensities which we share with the brute creation, and the aspirations which connect us with the author of our being. The rational soul contemplates means only in reference to their ends; whilst the sensuous nature reposes in means alone, and looks no farther. Imagination, alternately the ally of each, most readily lends her powerful aid to the ignobler party. Her golden hues are more easily employed to exalt and refine the grossness of appetite, than to impart brilliancy and allurement to objects brought within the sphere of human vision by the exercise of faith and hope. Her draperies are adjusted with greater facility, to clothe the nakedness and to conceal the shame of those things with which she is most conversant, than to embellish the forms, and add grace to the proportions of things obscurely disclosed at few and transient intervals. It is with this formidable alliance of sense and imagination that religion has to contend. Her aim is to win over to her side that all-powerful mental faculty which usually takes part with her antagonist, and thus to shed over every step in life the colours borrowed from its ultimate as contrasted with its immediate tendency;—to teach us to regard the pleasures and the pains of our mortal state in the light in which we shall view them in our immortal existence; to make things hateful or lovely now, according as they impede or promote our welfare hereafter. He is a religious, or in the appropriate language of theology, a "regenerate" man, who, trained to this discipline, habitually transfers to the means he employs, the aversion or the dislike due to the end he contemplates; who discerns and loathes the poison in the otherwise tempting cup of unhallowed indulgence, and perceives and loves the medicinal balm in the otherwise bitter draught of hardy self-denial. Good Richard Baxter erected his four folio volumes as a dam with which to stay this confluent flood of sense and imagination, and to turn aside the waters into a more peaceful and salutary channel. When their force is correctly estimated, it is more reasonable to wonder that he and his fellow-labourers have succeeded so well, than that their success has been no greater.

On his style as an author, Baxter himself is the best critic. "The commonness and the greatness of men's necessity," he says, "commanded me to do any thing that I could for their relief, and to bring forth some water to cast upon this fire, though I had not at hand a silver vessel to carry it in, nor thought it the most fit. The plainest words are the most profitable oratory in the weightiest matters. Fineness for ornament, and delicacy for delight; but they answer not necessity, though sometimes they may modestly attend that which answers it." He wrote to give utterance to a full mind and a teeming spirit. Probably he never consumed forty minutes in as many years, in the mere selection and adjustment of words. So to have employed his time, would in his judgment have been a sinful waste of that precious gift. "I thought to have acquainted the world with nothing but what was the work of time and diligence, but my conscience soon told me that there was too much of pride and selfishness in this, and that humility and self-denial required me to lay by the affectation of that style, and spare that industry which tended but to advance my name with men, when it hindered the main work and crossed my end." Such is his own account; and, had he consulted Quinctilian, he could have found no better precept for writing well than that which his conscience gave him for writing usefully. First of all the requisites for excelling in the art of composition, as one of the greatest masters of that art in modern times, Sir Walter Scott, informs us, is "to have something to say." When there are thoughts that burn, there never will be wanting words that breathe. Baxter's language is plain and perspicuous when his object is merely to inform; copious and flowing when he exhorts; and when he yields to the current of his feelings, it becomes redundant and impassioned, and occasionally picturesque and graphic. There are innumerable passages of the most touching pathos and unconscious eloquence, but not a single sentence written for effect. His chief merit as an artist is, that he is perfectly artless; and that he employs a style of great compass and flexibility, in such a manner as to demonstrate that he never thought about it, and as to prevent the reader, so long at least as he is reading, from thinking about it either.

The canons of criticism, which the great nonconformist drew from his conscience, are however, sadly inapplicable to verse. Mr. James Montgomery has given his high suffrage in favour of Baxter's poetical powers, and justifies his praise by a few passages selected from the rest with equal tenderness and discretion. It is impossible to subscribe to this heresy even in deference to such an authority; or to resist the suspicion that the piety of the critic has played false with his judgment. Nothing short of an actual and plenary inspiration will enable any man who composes as rapidly as he writes, to give meet utterance to those ultimate secretions of the deepest thoughts and the purest feelings in which the essence of poetry consists. Baxter's verses, which however are not very numerous, would be decidedly improved by being shorn of their rhyme and rhythm, in which state they would look like very devout and judicious prose, as they really are.

Every man must and will have some relief from his more severe pursuits. His faithful pen attended Baxter in his pastime as in his studies; and produced an autobiography, which appeared after his death in a large folio volume. Calamy desired to throw these posthumous sheets into the editorial crucible, and to reproduce them in the form of a corrected and well-arranged abridgment. Mr. Orme laments the obstinacy of the author's literary executor, which forbade the execution of this design. Few who know the book will agree with him. A strange chaos indeed it is. But Grainger has well said of the writer, that "men of his size are not to be drawn in miniature." Large as life, and finished to the most minute detail, his own portrait, from his own hand, exhibits to the curious in such things a delineation, of which they would not willingly spare a single stroke, and which would have lost all its force and freedom if reduced and varnished by any other limner, however practised, or however felicitous. There he stands, an intellectual giant as he was, playing with his quill as Hercules with the distaff, his very sport a labour, under which any one but himself would have staggered. Towards the close of the first book occurs a passage, which, though often republished, and familiar to most students of English literature, must yet be noticed as the most impressive record in our own language, if not in any tongue, of the gradual ripening of a powerful mind, under the culture of incessant study, wide experience, and anxious self-observation. Mental anatomy, conducted by a hand at once so delicate and so firm, and comparisons so exquisitely just, between the impressions and impulses of youth, and the tranquil conclusions of old age, bring his career of strife and trouble to a close of unexpected and welcome serenity. In the full maturity of such knowledge as is to be acquired on earth, of the mysteries of our mortal and of our immortal existence, the old man returns at last for repose to the elementary truths, the simple lessons, and the confiding affections of his childhood; and writes an unintended commentary, of unrivalled force and beauty, on the inspired declaration, that to become as little children is the indispensable, though arduous condition of attaining to true heavenly wisdom.

To substitute for this self-portraiture, any other analysis of Baxter's intellectual and moral character, would indeed be a vain attempt. If there be any defect or error of which he was unconscious, and which he therefore has not avowed, it was the combination of an undue reliance on his own powers of investigating truth, with an undue distrust in the result of his inquiries. He proposed to himself, and executed, the task of exploring the whole circle of the moral sciences, logic, ethics, divinity, politics, and metaphysics, and this toil he accomplished amidst public employments of ceaseless importunity, and bodily pains almost unintermitted. Intemperance never assumed a more venial form; but that this insatiate thirst for knowledge was indulged to a faulty excess, no reader of his life, or of his works, can doubt. In one of his most remarkable treatises "On Falsely Pretended Knowledge," the dangerous result of indulging this omnivorous appetite is peculiarly remarkable. Probabilities, the only objects of such studies, will at length become evanescent, or scarcely perceptible, when he who holds the scales refuses to adjust the balance, until satisfied that he has laden each with every suggestion and every argument which can be derived from every author who has preceded him in the same inquiries. Yet more hopeless is the search for truth, when this adjustment, once made, is again to be verified as often as any new speculations are discovered; and when the very faculty of human understanding, and the laws of reasoning, are themselves to be questioned and examined anew as frequently as doubts can be raised of their adaptation to their appointed ends. Busied with this immense apparatus, and applying it to this boundless field of inquiry, Baxter would have been bewildered by his own efforts, and lost in the mazes of a universal skepticism, but for the ardent piety which possessed his soul, and the ever recurring expectation of approaching death, which dissipated his ontological dreams, and roused him to the active duties, and the instant realities of life. Even as it is, he has left behind him much, which, in direct opposition to his own purposes, might cherish the belief that human existence was some strange chimera, and human knowledge an illusion, did it not fortunately happen that he is tedious in proportion as he is mystical. Had he possessed and employed the wit and gayety of Boyle, there are some of his writings to which a place must have been assigned in the *Index Expurgatorius* of Protestantism.

Amongst his contemporaries, Baxter appears to have been the object of general reverence, and of as general unpopularity. His temper was austere and irritable, his address ungracious and uncouth. While cordially admitting the merits of each rival sect, he concurred with none, but was the common censor and opponent of all. His own opinions on church government coincided with the later judgment, or, as it should rather be said, with the concessions of Archbishop Usher. They adjusted the whole of that interminable dispute to their mutual satisfaction at a conference which did not last above half an hour; for each of them was too devoutly intent on the great objects of Christianity to differ with each other very widely as to mere ritual observances. The contentions by which our forefathers were agitated on these subjects, have now happily subsided into a speculative and comparatively uninteresting debate. They produced their best, and perhaps their only desirable result, in diffusing through the Church, and amongst the people of England, an indestructible conviction of the folly of attempting to coerce the human mind into a servitude to any system or profession of belief; or of endeavouring to produce amongst men any real uniformity of opinion on subjects beyond the cognisance of the bodily senses, and of daily observation. They have taught us all to acknowledge in practice, though some may yet deny in theory, that as long as men are permitted to avow the truth, the inherent diversities of their understandings, and of their circumstances, must impel them to the acknowledgment of corresponding variations of judgment, on all questions which touch the mysteries of the present or of the future life. If no man laboured more, or with less success, to induce mankind to think alike on these topics, no one ever exerted himself more zealously, or more effectually, than did Richard Baxter, both by his life and his writings, to divert the world from those petty disputes which falsely assume the garb of religious zeal, to those eternal and momentous truths, in the knowledge, the love, and the practice of which, the essence of religion consists.

One word respecting the edition of his works, to which we referred in the outset. For the reason already mentioned, we have stuck to our long-revered folios, without reading so much as a page of their diminutive representatives, and can therefore report nothing about them. But after diligently and repeatedly reading the two introductory volumes by Mr. Orme, we rejoice in the opportunity of bearing testimony to the merits of a learned, modest, and laborious writer, who is now, however, beyond the reach of human praise or censure. He has done every thing for Baxter's memory which could be accomplished by a skilful abridgment of his autobiography, and a careful analysis of the theological library of which he was the author; aided by an acquaintance with the theological literature of the seventeenth century, such as no man but himself has exhibited, and which it may safely be conjectured no other man possesses. Had Mr. Orme been a member of the Established Church, and had he chosen a topic more in harmony with the studies of that learned body, his literary abilities would have been far more correctly estimated, and more widely celebrated. We fear that they who dissent from her communion, and who are therefore excluded from her universities and her literary circles, are not to expect for their writings the same toleration which is so firmly secured for their persons and their ministry. Let them not, however, be dejected. Let them take for examples those whom they have selected as teachers; and learning from Richard Baxter to live and to write, they will either achieve his celebrity, or will be content, as he was, to labour without any other recompense than the tranquillity of his own conscience, the love of the people among whom he dwelt, and the approbation of the Master to whom every hour of his life, and every page of his books, were alike devoted.

PHYSICAL THEORY OF ANOTHER LIFE.*

[EDINBURGH REVIEW, 1840.]

IN a series of volumes of later birth than that from which the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm" takes the title of his literary peerage, he has bent his strength to the task of revealing to itself the generation to which he belongs. A thankless office that of the censorship! A formidable enterprise this, to rebuke the errors of a contentious age, while repelling the support of each of the contending parties! To appease the outraged self-complacency of mankind, such a monitor will be cited before a tribunal far more relentless than his own. Heedless both of contumely and of neglect, he must pursue his labours in reliance on himself and on his cause; or, if fame be the reward to which he aspires, he must content himself with the anticipation of posthumous renown. It is not, however, easy for the aspirant himself to find the necessary aliment for such hopes. The writer of these works will therefore indulge us in a theory invented for the aid of his and our own imagination. Let it be supposed, that, instead of yet living to instruct the world, he was now engaged in bringing to the test of experiment his own speculations as to the condition of mankind in the future state. He reappears amongst sublunary men under the auspices of some not unfriendly editor; who, however, being without any other sources of intelligence respecting his course of life and studies, has diligently searched his books for such intimations as may furnish the materials for a short "Introductory Notice" of him and of them. The compiler is one of those who prefer the positive to the conjectural style of recounting matters of fact; and has assumed the freedom of throwing into the form of unqualified assertion the inferences he had gleaned from detached passages of the volumes he is about to republish. With the help of this slight and not very improbable hypothesis, the author of these works, while still remaining amongst us, may suppose himself to be reading, in some such lines as the following, the sentence which the critic of a future day will pass on his literary character.

One of those seemingly motionless rivers which wind their way through the undulating surface of England, creeps round the outskirts of a long succession of buildings, half town, half village, where the monotony of the wattled cottage is relieved by the usual neighbourhood of structures of greater dignity;—the moated grange—the mansion-house, pierced by lines of high narrow windows—the square tower of the church, struggling through a copse of lime trees—the gray parsonage, where the conservative rector meditates his daily newspaper and his weekly discourse—the barn-fashioned meeting-house, coeval with the accession of the House of Hanover—and near it the decent residence, in which, since that auspicious era, have dwelt the successive pastors of that wandering flock—fanning a generous spirit of resistance to tyrants, now happily to be encountered only in imagination, or in the records of times long since passed away.

Towards the close of the last century, a mild and venerable man ruled his household in that modest but not unornamented abode; for there might be seen the solemn portraits of the original confessors of nonconformity, with many a relic commemorative of their sufferings and their worth. Contrasted with these were the lighter and varied embellishments which bespeak the presence of refined habits, female taste, and domestic concord. There also were drawn up, in deep files, the works and the biographies of the Puritan divines, from Thomas Cartwright, the great antagonist of Whitgift, to Matthew Pool, who, in his *Synopsis Criticorum*, vindicated the claims of the rejected ministers to profound Biblical learning. This veteran battalion was flanked by a company of recruits drafted from the polite literature of a more frivolous age. Rich in these treasures, and in the happy family with whom he shared them, the good man would chide or smile away such clouds as checkered his habitual serenity, when those little nameless courtesies, so pleasantly interchanged between equals, were declined by the orthodox incumbent, or accepted with elaborate condescension by the wealthy squire. The democratic sway of the ruling elders, supreme over the finances and the doctrines of the chapel, failed to draw an audible sigh from his resolute spirit, even when his more delicate sense was writhing under wounds imperceptible to their coarser vision. He had deliberately made his choice, and was content to pay the accustomed penalties. A sectarian in name, he was at heart a Catholic, generous enough to feel that the insolence of some of his neighbours, and the vulgarity of others, were rather the accidents of their position than the vices of their character. Vexations such as these were beneath the regard of him who maintained in the village the sacred cause for which martyrs had sacrificed life with all its enjoyments; and who aspired to train up his son to the same honourable service, ill requited as it was by the glory or the riches of this transitory world.

That hope, however, was not to be fulfilled. The youth had inherited his father's magnanimity, his profound devotion, his freedom of thought, and his thirst for knowledge. But he disclaimed the patrimony of his father's ecclesiastical opinions. His was not one of those minds which adjust themselves to whatever mould early habits may have prepared for them. It was compounded of elements, between which there are no apparent affinities, but the reverse; and which, for that reason, produce in their occasional and unfrequent combination, a character substantive, individual, and strongly discriminated from that of other men. Shrinking from the coarse familiarities of the world, he thirsted for the world's applause—at once a very libertine in the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, and a very worshipper of all legitimate authority—alternately bracing his nerves for theological strife, and dissolving them in romantic dreams—now buried in the depths of retirement, that he might plunge deeper still into the solitudes of his own nature; and then revealing his discoveries in a style copied from the fashionable models of philosophical oratory;—the young man of whom we tell might be described as a sensitive plant grafted on a Norwegian pine, as a Spartan soldier enamoured of the Idylls of Theocritus, or as an anchorite studious of the precepts of the cosmetic earl of Chesterfield. Nature and accident combined to produce this contrast; integrity and truth gradually blended it into one harmonious, though singular whole. The robust structure of his understanding might have rendered him a rude dogmatist, if the delicate texture of his sensitive or spiritual frame had not forbidden every approach of arrogance. Exploring with intrepid diligence the great questions debated amongst men regarding their internal interests, he recoiled with disgust from the unmannerly habits, the sordid passions, and the petty jealousies which proclaim, but too loudly, that while we dispute about the path to heaven, we are still treading the miry ways of this uncelestial world. Angelic abodes, and holy abstractions, and universal love, were the alluring themes; but, handled as they were by polemics in the language of Dennis, and in the spirit of the Dunciad, our theological student was sometimes tempted to wish that the day on which he was initiated into the mysteries of the hornbook might be blotted from the calendar. Thrown into early association with the depressed and less prosperous party in the ecclesiastical quarrels of his native land, the asperities of the contest presented themselves to his inquisitive and too susceptible eye, unmitigated by the graceful and well-woven veil, beneath which sophistry and rancour can find a specious disguise when allied to rank and fortune and other social distinctions. Episcopal charges and congregational pamphlets might vie with each other in bitterness and wrong; but there rested with the mitred disputant an unquestionable advantage in the grace and dignity and seeming composure with which he inflicted pain and quickened the appetite for revenge. By the unsullied moral sense of the young divine, either form of malevolence might be equally condemned; but to his fastidious taste the ruder aspect which it bore amongst the advocates of dissent was by far the more offensive.

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* *Physical Theory of Another Life.* By the author of "Natural History of Enthusiasm." 8vo. London, 1839.

Feelings painfully alive to the ungraceful and the homely in human character, invariably indicate an absence of the higher powers of imagination. To a great painter the countenance of no man is entirely devoid of beauty. To one worthy of the much prostituted name of poet, no forms of society are without their interest and their charm. But he whom the gods have not made poetical may be kind-hearted and wise, and even possessed by many a brilliant fancy, and by many a noble aspiration; and so it fared with this scion of a nonconformist race. From the coarseness of a spiritual democracy, from the parsimonious simplicity of their sacred edifices, from the obtrusive prominence of the leaders of their worship, and from their seeming isolation in the midst of the great Christian commonwealth, his thoughts turned to those more august communions, where the splendours of earth symbolize the hierarchies of heaven—where the successors in an unbroken lineage of apostles and martyrs are yet ministering at the altar—where that consecrated shrine echoes to the creeds and the supplications of the first converts to the faith—and where alone can flourish those arduous but unobtrusive virtues, of which an exact subordination of ranks forms the indispensable basis. Already half-diverted by such yearnings as these from his hereditary standard, his return to the embrace of the Episcopal Church was further aided by a morbid dislike, unworthy of his powerful intellect, of falling into common-place trains of thought or language. Educated in a body through which religious opinions and pious phrases but too lightly circulate, his instinctive dread of vulgarity led him into speculations where such associates would be shaken off, and to the use of a style such as was never employed by the dwellers in tabernacles. Of a nature the most unaffected, and irreproachably upright in the search of truth, he conducted his inquiries with such elaborate fineness of speech, and with such a fear of acquiescing in the bare creed of the school in which he had been bred, that his fellow-scholars must have formed an unjust estimate of their companion, had he not been withdrawn in early life to other associations, and to far different studies from those which they had pursued in common. From his parental village, the future author was transferred to the remote and busy world in which our English youth are instructed in the unjoyous science of special pleading, and trained for the dignities of the coif.

By the unlearned in such matters, more distinct evidence of this passage in his life may perhaps be demanded than the indications which his writings afford of a technical acquaintance with the law. But every "free and accepted brother" of the craft will recognise, in his frequent and curiously exact use of forensic language, a confidence and a skill which belong only to the acolite in those studies. That the Term Reports would be searched in vain for the specimens of his dialectic powers may, however, be readily believed. Thurlow had as little to fear from the rivalry of the author of the "Task," as Lord Cottenham from that of the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm." Westminster Hall is no theatre to be trodden by men of pensive spirits, delicate nerves, and high-wrought sensibilities. It is to England what the plain of

Elis was to Greece; and when a Pindar shall arise to celebrate the triumphs achieved there, he must sing of heroes who have rejoiced in the dust and sweat and turmoil of the strife, of men of thick skins and robust consciences, buoyant and fearless, prompt in resources, and unscrupulous in the use of them. Far otherwise the original of the portrait, so vividly yet so unconsciously self-drawn in these volumes. Every lineament tells of one incapable of lending himself to any wilful sophistry—of a man rich both in knowledge and in power, though destitute of that quiet energy which in judicial tribunals, finds appropriate utterance in the simplest combinations of the plainest words—of a mind banqueting on contemplations most abhorrent from those of the peremptory paper. Not, however, "the worst of all his ills, the noisy bar." Political strife shed a repulsive gloom over the other halls of the ancient palace of Westminster. The whole tribe of party writers, diurnal and hebdomadal, overshadowed his path, like a flight of obscene birds, polluting by their touch and distracting by their dissonance those researches into the interests of the commonwealth and the duties of her chiefs, to which he desired to address a serene and unbiassed judgment. His heart assured, and his observation convinced him, that not merely the leaders, but even the subalterns of contending factions, were far wiser and better men than they appeared in those clever, reckless, and malignant sketches thrown off from day to day by writers condemned to lives of ceaseless excitement, and excluded from the blessings of leisure and of self-communion.

It is an old tale. Our author bade the town farewell, yet in a spirit far different from that of the injured Thales. He had no wrongs, real or imaginary, to resent, nor one sarcasm for the great city in which he had faintly wooed the smiles of fortune. With a mind as tranquil as the rural scenes to which he retired, he sought there leisure for many an unworldly and for some whimsical speculations, with a resting-place for the household and the library which divided his heart between them.

A topographical catalogue of the books which a man has collected and arranged for his own delight, will lay open some of the recesses of his bosom as clearly as ever the character of courtier or cavalier was sketched by the pen of Clarendon.

In the chamber where our recluse held his reign, the monarch of many a well-peopled province, giving audience in turn to each of his many-tongued subjects, and exacting from them all tribute at his pleasure, might be seen, supreme in place and favour, a venerable copy of the Jewish and Christian scriptures. A troop of tall, sad-coloured folios, the depositories of the devout studies and anxious self-searchings of the Puritan divines, was drawn up on shelves within reach of his outstretched arm. With but little additional effort it encountered a tribe of more lofty discourse, bred in the sacred solitudes of Port-Royal, yet redolent of the passion of their native land for an imposing and graceful demeanour. Honest George Latimer, with a long line of Episcopal and Episcopalian successors, held a position a little ostentatiously prominent, accorded to them not merely from their own unrivalled worth and beauty, but also perhaps from the wish of the autocrat to avow their influence over him. But the main power of his state consisted in a race of ancient lineage and obsolete tongues, beginning with Clement, Justin, and Irenæus, and so onward through the long series of Greek and Latin Fathers, ecclesiastical historians, acts of councils and of saints, decretals, missals, and liturgies, all in turn casting their transient lights and their deep shadows over the checkered fortunes of the Christian Church. Brought within the precincts of this wide dominion, Homer, Æschylus, Dante, Shakspeare, and the humbler partakers of their inspiration, awaited at some distance the occasional summons of this mighty potentate. But in their reverend aspect might be perceived something, which confessed that they were not amongst his chosen and habitual companions. Court favour here, as elsewhere, seemed to be capricious in proportion as it was diffusive; and writers on physiology, astronomy, plants, insects, birds, and fishes, shared with metaphysicians, moralists, and the writers of civil history, the hours occasionally withdrawn by their master from more serious intercourse with his apostolic, patristic, papal, and reformed counsellors. In short, it was one of those rooms which he who can securely possess, quietly enjoy, and wisely use, may, in sober truth, pity the owners of Versailles and the Escurial.

Wise men read books that they may learn to read themselves, and for this purpose quit their libraries for the open air. The heath, the forest, or the river-side, is the true academy. There the student, with no kind neighbour to dissipate his thoughts, and with no importunate author to chain them down, casts them into such forms of soliloquy or dialogue, of verse or prose, as best suits the humour or the duties of the passing day. This peripatetic discipline is best observed under cover of an angling rod, a bill hook, or a gun; for then may not the vicar or the major, without an evident breach of privilege, detain you on the county-rate question, nor may the gentler voice of wife or daughter upbraid you with the sad list of your unrequited visits? Besides, your country philosopher flatters himself that in hooking a trout, or flushing a pheasant, his eye is as true and his hand as steady as those of the squire; and from this amiable weakness the historian of enthusiasm would seem not to have been quite exempt. Emerging from his library as one resolved to bring home some score head of game, his stout purposes would gradually die away as he reached the brook, whose windings were oddly associated in his mind with various theories by which the world was one day to be enlightened, and with many half-conceived chapters of essays yet to be written. To meditate on the advantages of meditation, was on these occasions one of his chosen exercises; and, in the ornate style to which he was wedded, he would muse on those in whom "the intellectual life is quick in all its parts." "It is," he would say, "as when the waters of a lake are left to deposit their feculence and to become pure as the ether itself, so that they not only reflect from their surface the splendours of heaven, but allow the curious eye to gaze delighted upon the decorated grottoes and sparkling caverns of the depth beneath. Or might we say, that the ground of the human heart is thickly fraught with seeds which never germinate under either a wintry or a too fervent sky; but let the dew come gently on the ground, and let mild suns warm it, and let it be guarded against external rudeness, and we shall see spring up the gayety and fragrance of a garden. The Eden of human nature has indeed long been trampled down and desolated and storms waste it continually; nevertheless the soil is still rich with the germs of its pristine beauty, the colours of paradise are sleeping in the clods, and a little favour, a little protection, a little culture, shall show what once was there. Or, if we look at the human spirit in its relation to futurity, it must be acknowledged that as an immortality of joy is its proper destiny, so it is moved by instincts which are the true prognostics of eternal life. Earthly passions quench these fore-scents of happiness, but meditation fosters them; and the life of the religious recluse is a delicious anticipation of pleasures that shall have no end."

Strange that one who justly claimed a high station among the bold and original thinkers of his times, should have woven this tissue of brave words, and should have decked his most elaborate inquiries with countless posies as garish as these! But the key to the riddle has already been given. Could notes have been struck less in unison with the Cantilena of the meeting-house? Could any have been touched better fitted to charm those dear but dangerous judges, who in winter evenings listen to a revered and familiar voice reciting passages, which still glow in their and in his own too partial eyes with all the freshness of creation? Has not the immutable decree gone forth, that though he whose home is secure from the invasions of the world may write excellently upon home education, he must watch jealously against home criticism? And yet an English gentleman of our railway age, who had devoted himself to an anchorite life, might with some reason insist that the fruits he had gathered for the use of other secluded households could be brought to no better test than the good or ill-liking of the companions of his own retreat. To betake himself, as our author was wont to do, "to some valley of silence," and there, as he expressed it, to "accumulate a rich treasure of undefined sentiments and indistinct conceptions," was to indulge in a diet at once intoxicating and unnutritious. The juices of his mental frame would have been altogether attenuated by thus feeding on bright unutterable day-dreams about the microcosm within him; or the unembodied spirits who surrounded him; or the physical structure of the paradise he hoped to regain; or any thing else, so long as it was but foreign to the pursuits, the cares, and the interests of the world in which he lived. But then would succeed the cheerful fireside talk, which compelled him to become intelligible to others and to himself. What Plato meant in many of his discourses, no one, with reverence be it spoken, has ever very clearly discovered; but who would have found courage to make the attempt, but for those bright fictions which bring the reader into a colloquial party, where much of the gaseous matter which must otherwise have exhaled into an impalpable mist, is fixed and brought within the range of human perception by the necessities of the dialogue. Even so, our modern speculator, after soaring "into that wide and uncircumscribed sphere wherein spirits excursive and philosophically modest take their range," and gathering there, "if not certain and irrefragable conclusions, at least scattered particles of wisdom, which he more highly esteemed than all the stamped coinage whereof dogmatism makes its boast," would make his way home again, and explain himself to an audience which Socrates might have envied. There, condescending to enter "within that bounded circle of things which may be measured on all sides and categorically spoken of," he would exhibit the inbred vigour of his understanding, quickened and guided by the native kindness of his heart. Had he not been a husband and a father, he would have been a mystic. His interior life would have degenerated into one protracted and unsubstantial vision, if his house had not echoed to a concert of young voices executing all manner of sprightly variations on the key-notes sounded by his own. His "free converse with truth and reason in the sanctuary of his own bosom," would have been held in that incommunicable language which reason was never yet able to understand, if his free converse with his boys and girls had not habitually admonished him that the sublime in words may be easily combined with the beautiful in sentences, without the slightest advantage to the author of the spell or to any one else. After musing on the compromise of antagonist principles throughout universal nature, he was thus taught the necessity for reconciling the hostile propensities of his own bosom—the one beckoning him to tread the dizzy confines which separate the transcendental from the nonsensical, the other inviting him to drag the river with his sons, or to read L'Allegro to his daughters. Peace was concluded on better terms for the father than the visionary. Each passing year found him a plainer-spoken man, more alive to sublunary thoughts, and more engaged in active duties. Yet to the last, like some of the great painters of his day, he eschewed transparent lights and clear outlines, and loved to delineate objects through a haze.

There is a great want of a philosophical essay on the choice, the benefits, and the treatment of the hobby horses. It would form a connecting link between the Libraries of Useful and of Entertaining Knowledge. Scarcely a man (the made-up and artificial man alone excepted) who could not be laid under contribution for such a work. Our learned and amiable recluse might have a whole chapter to himself. When it was not a field-day with him, and he had no exercises in divinity to perform, he would descend from the great horse, and amble about to his heart's content on a favourite pad, which, however, it was his whim to dress in the housings of his tall charger, and to train to the same paces. To extract the marrow of church history was his appointed duty—to construct schemes of physiology his habitual pastime. Uncle Toby never threw up his intrenchments, nor "my father" his theories with greater spirit. He worked out, at least on paper, a complete plan of education, founded on a diligent survey of the functions of the brain; and composed an elaborate system, exhibiting the future condition of man when disencumbered of those viscous and muscular integuments, which in the present life serve as a kind of sheath to protect the sentient mind within, from the intensities of delight or of pain to which, without such a shelter, it would be exposed. Too wise ever to become frivolous or vapid, his wisdom was not of that exquisite mould, which exhibits itself in unimpaired lustre, in a state of gayety and relaxation. Whatever might be his theme, his march was still the same, stately, studied, and wearisome. His theological and his cerebral inquiries were all conducted in the same sonorous language. Period rolled after period in measured cadence, page answered page in scientific harmony. This paragraph challenged applause for its melodious swell, that for its skilful complexity, the next for the protracted simile with which it brought some abstruse discussion to a picturesque and graceful close. Any of them would have furnished Dr. Blair with illustrations of his now-forgotten rules for writing well; and exceedingly fine writing it was. But, after all, one's hobby might as well be put into a waltz as into the grand menage. It is only in his own easy natural shuffling gait that the animal shows to advantage. So kind-hearted, however, and so full of matter was our rider, that the most fastidious critic could hardly think twice of such a trifle.

The lines had fallen to him in pleasant places, and his gratitude to Providence expressed itself in depicting his goodly heritage for the delight and the emulation of others. Not, indeed, that he laid bare the sacred recesses of his home to the vulgar gaze, by publishing journals, confessions, or an autobiography. He would just as soon have surrendered his body to the surgeons for dissection as an *anatomie vivante.* But reversing the familiar method of conveying moral precepts under the veil of narrative, he told unconsciously in a didactic form, a story as beautiful as it was true. An English country house was the scene: the *dramatis personæ* parents, enjoying competency, health, and leisure, very learned and amiable withal, and wise above measure, with a troop of boys and girls as intelligent and docile as they were gay: the plot or fable being made up of the late, though complete development of their various mental powers.

That such a house did exist, and that beneath its tranquil shelter many a youth and many a maid were trained to improve and to adorn the land which gave them birth, no reader of the book called "Home Education," will for a moment doubt; or at least none who has ever invented a theory or revolved an apophthegm while watching the play or listening to the prattle of his own children. But that, north or south of Trent, such another is to be found must be disbelieved, until a commission of married men, of six years' standing at the least, shall have ascertained and reported the fact. What with managing constituents and turnpike trusts, writing sermons and prescriptions, meeting the hounds to-day and the quarter-sessions to-morrow, an English country gentleman, whether clerical or laic, who should undertake the late development of the "Ideality," and the "Conceptive Faculty," and the "Sense of Analogy," of his children, though he should address himself to "the intuitive faculties" alone, and those "gently stimulated by pleasurable emotions," would, in a myriad of cases to one, end in something very different from the promised result of "putting their minds into a condition of intellectual opulence." Adam was earning the bread of his sons by the sweat of his brow, while they were learning to keep sheep, and to till the ground, and such has ever since been the condition of his descendants. Here and there may perhaps be found an Eden such as our author inhabited and described, where exempt from the cares of earth, and cultivating a correspondence between the human and the Divine mind, fathers such as he was are training their offspring to apprehend truth, to impart truth, and to discover truth. A lovely scene it was, and drawn with all the earnest pathos of paternal love. But as the Belvidere Apollo differs from an honest sportsman of our days, or the Godfrey of Tasso from an officer of her majesty's Life-Guards, even such was the difference between our rural philosopher and the ten thousand respectable gentlemen over the walls of whose country mansions fertile vines have crept, and whose tables are thickly set with olive branches: though amongst them may be found double first-class men, and here and there a senior wrangler.

Thus flowed on a life which kings might have envied, sages approved, and poets sung, if in these later days those illustrious personages had not become very chary of such favours. Things looked as if the village sculptor and versifier would be the sole guardian of his posthumous fame, and he known to posterity only as one of those best of fathers and of men, over whose remains the yew tree in the neighbouring church-yard stood sentinel. Such a catastrophe would have suited well with his quiet scorn of terrestrial glory, but ill with those high-wrought graces of style in which he was accustomed to express it. Religion and philosophy may diminish the danger, but hardly the strength, of the universal craving for the esteem of our fellow-mortals. He knew and had reflected much; and it was his duty to impart it. He had discovered many current errors, and it behooved him to expose them. His flow of language was choice and copious, and philanthropy itself suggested that he should awaken all its melodies. If renown would follow, if a frivolous world would admire her monitor, if his labours of love should win for him the regard of the discerning few, or even the applause of the unthinking many, why, he was too benevolent, too honest, and too wise, either to despise the recompense or to affect to depreciate it; and thus he became an author.

To "exhibit at one view the several principal forms of spurious or corrupted religion," had for many years been his chosen task. But art is long, and life short; and the stately edifice pictured in his imagination, was abandoned for a range of structures of humbler form, though better suited to the taste and habits of his age. An Essay on Enthusiasm prepared the way for another on Fanaticism, to which were destined to succeed treatises on Superstition, on Credulity, on the Corruption of Morals, and on Skepticism. Of this series, the four last never saw the light; the place assigned in the programme to Superstition having been usurped by Spiritual Despotism, and by a succession of tracts drawn up in battle array against those of the Oxford Catholics, under the title of "Primitive Christianity." Thus was produced an incomplete course of lectures on Ecclesiastical Nosology—a science which, however inviting, could not exercise an undisputed influence over one who lived in such scenes, and who was blessed with such associates as we have mentioned.

Nothing more easy than the transition from the spiritual diseases of the world to the mental health of his own nursery—from the contemplation of souls infected by the taint of their mortal prison-house, to a meditation on immortal spirits, whose corporeal shrines shall eternally enhance their purest joys and participate in the discharge of their most exalted duties. As when a Teutonic commentator, a man egregious and most celebrated, long harassed with the arrangement of some intractable chorus, escaping at length from its anapæstic or ditrochæan bondage into an excursus on the dress and ornaments of the Grecian stage, revels and lingers there, rejoicing in his freedom, and recruits his strength for new metrical labours; so our author, (whose Homeric style, it may be perceived, is contagious,) averting his thoughts from the sad legends of human weakness, which fill so large a space in the history of the Christian Church, would take refuge in the paradise of home, or in musings on that eternal rest of which earth has no other type so vivid or so endearing. On his "Natural History of Enthusiasm," faithful critics (ourselves among the number) pronounced a sentence, which, if not altogether flattering to the self-esteem of the historian, may yet have contributed to that improvement in the art of authorship which is to be distinctly traced in his later books.

Time and space would fail us, should we now endeavour to estimate all his labours in that branch of moral or religious science which he undertook to cultivate. But the book called "Religious Despotism," demands at least a passing notice. Incomparably the most vigorous offspring of his brain, it has had, like some portionless younger brother, to struggle on against unmerited neglect; the whole patrimony of praise having been seized upon by the book on Enthusiasm, in virtue of the law of literary primogeniture. An ill-chosen title, the want of lucid order, and a grandiloquence here more than ever out of place, may partly account for this. Be the world, however, assured, that among the works on ecclesiastical polity which it has of late received with acclamation, there is not one so worthy of being reverently praised and inwardly digested.

The divisions "now so much exasperated that exist amongst us, on questions belonging to the exterior forms and the profession of religion, are of a kind that affect the Christian with inexpressible grief, the patriot with shame and dismay, and the statesman with hopeless perplexity." So says our author, and so in turn say all the disputants. But he alone, as far as our reading extends, has breathed this complaint in the true spirit of Christian kindness, united to a catholic breadth of capacity and of knowledge.

What are the legitimate foundations, and what the proper limits of sacerdotal authority?—questions proposed and answered by many a polemic, religious and political; and sometimes, though very rarely, discussed in the spirit of a philosophy more pure and elevated than is usually imbibed by such controversialists. How this debate was managed by a man of robust sense, profound learning, and still deeper piety, who, though too upright and too fastidious to surrender himself to the extravagances of any party, had a wide personal acquaintance with the modes of thinking and with the habits of all, would be well worth the knowing, even if that knowledge did not contribute to our more immediate object of delineating his literary character. Ample, however, must be the space in which to make a complete exhibition, or even an exact epitome of his doctrines. It will be enough to indicate such of them as he seems to have regarded with peculiar attachment.

Religion, an indestrustible element of our nature, may exist as a system of superstitious terrors; in which case the abject humiliation of the proselyte will give the measure of the authority of the priest. Or it may exist as a genuine revelation from Heaven; but even so, the fluctuating fashions of the world will exalt or depress the powers of the ministers of the purest faith. The Greek patriarch, after the manner of his nation, scaled such heights of authority as subtlety and eloquence could command for him. The successors of Peter triumphed by force of the same audacious energy which had before given empire to the Cæsars. Boasting of her liberties, the Gallican Church was content to lose every thing *hormis l'honneur*.

In England, ecclesiastical despotism had to encounter the inflexible spirit of our barons and burgesses; while *Demos*, the arch-tyrant of the United States, supreme over all rulers, temporal and spiritual, lays alike on president and priest his inexorable command to progress—urging them both onward in the same impatient career. But, be the influence of national character on sacerdotal dominion what it may, the state must either set limits to the power of the church or must bow to her supremacy. Hands which grasp the keys, will, if unfettered, soon usurp the sceptre and the sword. Religion unites men in societies, resting on a basis more profound, and yet agitated by excitements more intense and frequent, than any other. Between a theocracy administered by the sacred order, and a church at once restrained and protected by law, there is no middle resting-place. "Alliance" is but a lofty euphemism for allegiance.

Competency and independence will still be the desire and the aim of the human heart, whether it beats under the corslet, the ermine, or the surplice. To refuse to ecclesiastics the gratification of this wish, is as imprudent as it is vain. While pointing the way to heaven, they are still our fellow-travellers in the ways of earth. Abandon them to the spontaneous support of their disciples, and there is an end of the mental composure necessary for their arduous duties, and there is an inlet to flatteries and to frauds, the most repugnant to their hallowed character. On such a system imposts are laid on the poor and the feeble-minded, and evaded by the wealthy and the supercilious. For the indigent no provision is made. All the more permanent and catholic schemes of Christian philanthropy are unheeded; and the greatest of all social interests is intrusted to mere impulses to which no rational lawgiver would confide the least. History records the result of this experiment, as tried not in the narrow form of the modern congregational system, but on the broader principle of thus creating funds to support the pastors of a province or a state. Constantine may have been the nursing father, but he was also the resolute reformer of the Church. Her primitive sanctity was impaired, not by the privileges he conferred, but by the rapacious habits on which the exercise of that imperial bounty entitled and enabled him to impose some restraint. Of the alliance which he negotiated, the essential condition was, that the Christian hierarchy should be defended by law in the possession of the wealth assigned to them, and should be prohibited by law from augmenting it by unworthy means.

Men uniting in religious fellowship must also be united by some scheme of internal organization. These societies must be made up of the teachers and the taught, of the governors and the governed. They should be rather families, in which there is much to be learned, to be borne, and to be done, than clubs held together by a revocable will for the enjoyment in common of equal privileges.

Absolute monarchy would be the most perfect scheme of civil, and absolute prelacy of ecclesiastical government, if kings and prelates were absolutely wise and just. Synods, parliaments, franchises, constitutional rights, inestimable as securities against social evils, are yet but proofs of that degeneracy which, in certain respects, they contribute to enhance. They impede the growth and the expansion of some of the noblest of our moral sentiments; such as loyalty, veneration, humility, and mutual confidence. Now, in these and similar feelings, the very essence of religion consists. Whatever ecclesiastical regimen most conduces to their development, is that which a Christian society would spontaneously assume. Episcopal rule is the "primitive form" in which pure Christianity appears among men: independency that which it acquires when men have learned to distrust each other. Patriarchal command and filial duty wait on that perfect love which casteth out fear; self-assertion and the impatience of control, on that restless fear which casts out love. Government and the graduated subordination of ranks would have been a divine ordinance, even if it had not been expressly and in terms promulgated as such. It may be read in the inspired volume; but it may be discerned almost as clearly in the natural distinctions of mankind. God himself has consecrated some to the royal, some to the episcopal, and some to the priestly office; and whether the world will hear or will forbear, that high commission is still extant in unimpaired force, and may never be disobeyed with impunity.

As in the domestic, so in the ecclesiastical household, the higher functions ought to be undertaken by those to whom that eminence is due, on the ground of superior endowments, whether natural or acquired. How to adjust the claims of rival candidates, is the great practical difficulty. Who shall decide which members of the church shall be raised to the clerical office, and which shall constitute the laity. Apostolical example, in this case, affords no rule for the guidance of later ages. When as yet congregations were to be formed, the choice of teachers inevitably belonged to the first promulgators of the faith. Neither will the sacred text yield an explicit answer to this inquiry. Nothing more studiously indefinite than the language of Paul, of Peter, and of John, regarding the external institutes of Christianity. Such outward forms they decidedly left in an inchoate and plastic state, to be moulded to the varying exigencies of mankind in different political societies.

From their writings, and from the practice of their immediate successors, may, however, be deduced one general principle. It is, that in the government of the Church the monarchical and the popular elements should be combined and harmonized. Yet to divorce them from each other is the common aim, though by opposite methods, both of those whose boast is their apostolical succession, and of those who exult in the freedom of religious democracy. Here both parties are untrue to their own cardinal maxims. The antiquarian divines explore their records in vain for a pretext for excluding the laity from a voice in deliberation, in discipline, and in the election of their bishops, priests, and deacons. On this subject they therefore decline, and shrink from their favourite and customary appeal to tradition. The pure biblicists search the inspired canon with equally ill success, for one word to show that the pastor should be the mere stipendiary and dependent of his flock, subsisting on their bounty, subject to their will, and removable at their pleasure. They therefore refuse in this discussion to admit "the Bible, and the Bible alone" as their complete and all-sufficient guide of conduct. Sacerdotal power and popular control, which, by a well adjusted equipoise, should mutually sustain the spiritual edifice, are thus, by their ill-judging partisans, arrayed as antagonist, or rather as hostile forces. In one direction the march of despotism, in another the progress of anarchy, is advanced by those to whom both should be equally abhorrent, as being equally opposed to their common faith.

How copious the eloquence with which the author of "Spiritual Despotism" would have disclaimed all responsibility for the opinions thus ascribed to him, and for the language in which they have been expressed! With what exuberant artifices of style would he have insisted that the mature results of the patient studies of his life, are not to be understood by any less laborious method than that of reading and meditating the volume in which he has himself recorded them! No protest could be more reasonable. Of such a book a fair estimate cannot be formed from the hasty sketch of an inconsiderable fragment, selected not as being more impressive than the rest, but it may be as indicating doctrines for which, as very nearly coinciding with his own, the abbreviator might desire to win at least a transient notice. Gratitude to him who has brought to the birth thoughts with which the mind has been long, though silently teeming, may overflow in unmeasured praise. Little, however, is hazarded in announcing this work as the most original, comprehensive, and profound contribution which any living writer in our own country has made to the science of ecclesiastical polity. They whose delight is in the transcendental and the obscure, who pine for theories which elude their grasp, and believe that to strain is to expand the mind, will judge otherwise. For once our author must submit to the reproach, perhaps the unwelcome reproach, of being perfectly intelligible. Drawing outlines of history with a hand as bold and free as that of Guizot, conversant with principles as recondite as those of Coleridge, and animated by the same chaste and fervent piety which hallows the speculations of Mr. Gladstone, his was the further praise of bringing to the encounter, with the loftiest abstractions, that athletic good sense which disdains to enlarge itself by looming through a fog. Master, as he was of the *chiar' oscuro*, the love of truth was too strong in him for the love of art. Addressing mankind on a subject of urgent and solemn interest, he rose so far above the fashions of his age, as to shun the region over which sublimity and nonsense hold divided rule; remembering, perhaps, that it has never been frequented by any of the master spirits of the world; and that, even amongst men divinely inspired, he who was at once the greatest and the most deeply learned, had preferred to speak five words to edification than to speak ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. To grapple with principles of the widest span, without requiring so much as a momentary repose in the lap of mysticism, is an admirable power. To refuse on such an occasion, the but too familiar and ready aid of that narcotic, is a real, though an unobtrusive virtue.

As the unwonted self-denial of thin potations will sometimes appear to him who has made it to deserve the reward of a generous cup of sack, so he who had thus submitted himself to the penance of tracing, in distinct and legible characters, the progress of spiritual despotism, his task accomplished, soared away into other contemplations more agreeable to himself at least, because more abstruse, which he revealed to the lower world under the enigmatical title of "Saturday Evening." He sought relief and found it, when ordinary mortals find little else than lassitude; for, in the full sense of that profound expression, he was a man spiritually minded. His assent to Christianity was no faint admission that the balance of conflicting arguments inclined in favour of that belief. It was a conviction rooted in the inmost recesses of his mind; the germinating principle of the devout thoughts which grew spontaneously in that well cultured and fertile soil. To measure the heights and the depths of the truths revealed or intimated in the inspired volume, was at once the solace and the habitual labour of his life.

From the strife of politicians, the wonders of art, and the controversies of the learned, he turned away to ponder on the hopes and prospects of the Christian Church, on her lapse from original purity, on the fellowship and isolation of her members, the limits of revealed knowledge, the dissolution and the perpetuity of our nature, and the modes of our future existence. Incapable of acquiescing tamely in any of the dogmatic systems of divinity, (all alike definite, cold, sterile, and earth-born,) he aspired to reach that upper region which the pure light visits, and whence alone it is reflected in all its purity. There he proposed to himself and handled problems of which Butler might have surmised the solution, and Milton evolved the latent glories. But he was attempting to scale eminences where the mightiest become conscious of their weakness, and the boldest imagination is taught the penury of her resources. To throw some unsteady and precarious lights on such themes, should limit the ambition, as it will unavoidably terminate the success, of all intellects but those of the most exalted order. Yet how abstain altogether from such endeavours to explore things undreamt of in our popular theology, when the ear has been trained to hear, however indistinctly, the undertones of the Divine voice, and the heart to understand, however imperfectly, the inarticulate language of the Divine government? Blessed in no vulgar degree with such perceptions, our author applied himself with reverence, and, with freedom of thought, to topics which, when so examined, can never be unfruitful, though the fruits may often be unripe, and to the great majority unpalatable. Take, as an example, the following abridgment of a chapter, entitled, "The State of Seclusion:"

From our narrow survey of the affairs of mankind, no principle of universal morals can be deduced, except as a matter of doubtful speculation and still recurring controversy, triumphant to-day, to be discarded to-morrow. Were it otherwise, the slumber of the soul, with all its attendant dreams and fantasies, must be broken. Our probationary state requires that we should exist only as the inhabitants of a narrow area, shut out from the general assembly of intelligent beings, and denied all access to those vehement and irresistible persuasions by which, with their comprehensive knowledge of the universal laws of the divine economy, they would constrain us to obedience. Within the walls of our prison-house we are condemned to grope in vain, if so we may discover the permanent tendencies and the ultimate issues of things. The great axioms of eternal virtue are rather obscured than illustrated by the complexity, the insignificance, and the obtrusive glare of those occurrences which make up national and individual history. Each man is straightened in his sphere of observation and of thought. His experience is incalculably small when compared to that of the whole human family, of which he is for the time a member. Of the events of preceding ages, he may catch some faint notices; of those of the ages to come, he lives and dies in profound ignorance. Between those who are entering and those who are about to quit this stage of existence, there are such distinctions of physical temperament as greatly intercept the tradition of knowledge from parents to their children. Geographical position, the antipathy of races, discordance of tastes, and differences of speech, contribute still further to segregate communities and their component parts. The intervention of a river, or a chain of mountains, will reduce to mute signs and gestures the language by which man holds intercourse with his fellows. Narrowing his pursuits and thoughts within a single path, the petty cares of life render him ignorant of what is passing beyond his daily walk, and unobservant of the far larger proportion of what occurs within it. So apparently inextricable is the confusion, and so many the seeming anomalies of all that falls under his personal notice, that man's existence assumes the semblance rather of a game of chance than of a system throughout which is to be traced the average result of established rules. So feeble is the faculty of generalization in most—so minute, urgent, and uniform, and yet so numerous the affairs in which they are engaged; such are the contaminations, and such the ridicule of life; so extravagant the folly in one direction, and so abject the misery in another, that the prospect open to any one of us, during his confinement in this sublunary state, is every where hedged round within narrow precincts, and bounded by a horizon as indistinct as it is near.

Yet from our prison-house we look out on populous regions of illimitable space, though forbidden to converse with their inhabitants. We perceive that, beyond the limits of our own planet, the same law of seclusion prevails. Creation does not form one continuous surface over which beings of the same order might pursue an unbroken path, but is made up of globes suspended in thin space at incalculable distances. While neighbouring worlds are thus estranged from each other, the vastness of the universe is exhibited to every percipient being within its range. Thus the isolation of man is but the development on earth of one great law by which all nature is pervaded. Created intelligences are every where kept apart from that communion with other ranks of being, whose greater comprehensiveness of knowledge would destroy the balance of conflicting motives, and reduce the rational will to a state of unresisting subjection. Man is isolated from preceding generations, and from all but a very inconsiderable number of his own, because the comprehensive experience which he might otherwise gain of the course of human affairs, would in the same manner be destructive of his liberty of choice. Each is left to gather from his separate experience moral rules at once unobtrusive, and yet capable of sufficient proof. Wisdom does not raise her voice in the streets; she calmly offers instruction to the prudent, but does not force it on the thoughtless. The division of created minds into distinct communities, and the various methods by which the members of the same community are separated from each other, are parts of that general ordinance or system by which a certain reserve is imposed on wisdom and on virtue. Things eternal and universal are unseen; things partial and temporal are alone submitted to our observation.

Such, divested of the embellishments with which they fell from his own hand, are the meditations to which the historian of Enthusiasm has devoted one of his "Saturday Evenings." It is a loss they can ill afford. Winnowed a little further, this splendid essay (for such in the original it really is) might, without the escape of any of its essences, be exhibited in the form of one or two simple and familiar truths:—as thus:

Moral probation is incompatible with a distinct and certain foresight of all the remote tendencies, and of all the ultimate results of our conduct. If the transient delights which allure us, and the overwhelming evils which follow in their train, were both at once revealed to the mental vision in the vivid colours and hard outlines of the naked reality, neither vice nor virtue could any longer exist among men. As probationers, we must live in the state of seclusion, that is, we must be cut off from those sources of information, which, if we had access to them, would prevent even a momentary equipoise between the present and the future—between those desires which crave immediate indulgence, and those which point to a distant but greater good. One of the causes by which the influx of such knowledge is impeded, is the insular position of our globe in the shoreless ocean of space; and as this physical isolation of worlds seems to pervade the celestial system, we may conjecture that "seclusion is a law of the universe," and that throughout the stellar regions imperfect knowledge is made conducive to the exercise and the improvement of virtue. There is but one Being to whom we are taught to ascribe complete and inflexible rectitude, because there is but one to whom we can attribute absolute omniscience.

Inconsiderable as is the amount of genuine ore employed in this essay, and in many other parts of the collection of which it forms no unfavourable specimen, it would be difficult to refer to a more apt illustration of the ductility and the brilliance of which moral truth is susceptible. What if Selden or Pascal would have extracted into a page or two of apophthegms the essential oils of all these discourses; and what though the capacity to concentrate thought be a nobler gift than the art to diffuse it; yet may this inferior power exist in a state of rare and admirable excellence. Genuine wisdom has many tongues and many aspects, and employs each in turn to express and to promote that love of mankind which, under all her external forms, is still her animating spirit. Yet it must be confessed, that she so habitually delights in the simplest garb, that when, as in these sabbatical essays, she decks herself out in the literary fashions of the day, one may hope to be forgiven for being unaware of her presence. They are infinitely more rich in knowledge and in power than the generation of the author would confess; and yet was not that generation to blame? Under draperies adjusted with such obtrusive skill, and of so elaborate a texture, men are seldom accustomed to find real beauty, and are therefore but little disposed to search for it.

When a biographer has conducted his hero to the tomb, he usually leaves him there. To the list of excepted cases must be added that of the author of "A Physical Theory of a Future Life." In form a speculative treatise, it may be considered as substantially a narrative of his existence beyond the confines of earth, in those scenes which most men occasionally anticipate, and which many have attempted to describe; some from the ambition for immortal fame, and some impelled by the cravings for immortal felicity. From the shelves of his well-filled library, sages and poets were summoned to contribute to the formation of this work. First, and before all, were consulted the writers of the sacred volume; of whom it may with the strictest truth be said, that they have established the triumph of good sense over the mere dreams of excited fancy. Of such dreams, none possessed a firmer hold on the Italian and Greek philosophers and their disciples, than that after death man was to pass into a state of pure incorporeity, and to be absorbed by the great mundane soul. Very different the teaching of the writers of the New Testament. They transferred from this world to the next the great truth—that human happiness requires not only that the mind be sound, but that it be lodged in a sound body. Irenæus and Tertullian informed our theorist that such was also the creed of the immediate successors of the apostles. Origen taught him, that to exist as a spirit wholly detached and separate from matter, is the incommunicable attribute of the omnipresent Deity; and instructed him to understand the luciform body of the Platonic system as identical with the spiritual body of the Christian revelation.

From the same great master he learned that, without such an instrumentality, minds created and subordinate must be cut off from all commerce with external things, and become nothing more than so many inert, insulated, and contemplative entities. With these great fathers of the Church he found the rest of that venerable college in harmony—copious in their inquiries respecting the nature of good and bad demons—assigning to the angelic host the nearest possible resemblance, and to the evil spirits the utmost possible dissimilarity, to the defecated intelligences of the Aristotelic learning; the one impassive to all sensual delights, the other inhaling with an unholy relish the savoury fumes of heathen sacrifices, but both clad with material integuments, subtilized to an imponderable and indefinite tenuity. Their volumes, especially, if we remember rightly, those of Augustine, revealed to him the farther secret of the manner in which spirits inhabiting these ethereal vehicles hold intercourse with each other; and even explained the shapes in which they manifest their presence to those exquisite organs of sensation by which alone they are perceptible. Cook, or La Perouse, never drew a plainer chart of their discoveries, than that which was thus laid open to our author of the regions of the blessed. Cuvier never examined the osseous structure of an antediluvian quadruped more closely, than the mental and physical constitution of the immortals was thus analyzed by some of those who in ancient times aspired one day to join that exalted company.

Other provinces of our author's literary dominions were yet to be explored. One contemptuous glance was given to the Koran, and to the paradise copied, as it might seem, by the prophet, from the Aphroditan temples of Paphos or Idalia. Homer exhibited to him the illustrious dead as so many victims of the inexorable fates against which they had contended so bravely on earth, and as agitated by passions which it was no longer permitted them to gratify. His great imitator discovered to the student, Elysian fields over which satiety reigned in eternal and undisputed sway, and which the poet himself advantageously exchanged, twelve centuries afterwards, for the outskirts of the "Inferno" with an occasional voyage of discovery through those gloomy mansions. The awful magican who placed him there lost much of his own inspiration, when, quitting the guidance of Virgil for that of Beatrice, he traversed in her company the seven heavens, and listened in the sun to the lectures of Thomas Aquinas, or received from the saints congregated in the form of an eagle in the planet Jupiter, a metaphysical comment on the mysteries of the divine decrees.

From the poets, our author next turned to the theological philosophers of his own and other countries. In Cudworth and Brucker he found the doctrines of the schools of ancient and of modern Europe in more perfect symmetry, and in greater clearness than in the works of the sages and schoolmen themselves; but cold as the latitudinarianism of the first, and dry as the antiquarian lore of the second. At length his hand rested on two volumes in which the post-sepulchral condition of man is delineated with a beauty and eloquence to which he rendered a willing, although a silent homage. One of those was the treatise of Thomas Burnett—*De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*—the other, that book on the "Light of Nature," in which Abraham Tucker traverses the world to come in his atomic or vehicular state. Burnett, it may be supposed, best knew his own strength and weakness, and judged rightly in choosing scientific or critical subjects, and in discussing them in a dead language. But to those who read his works it must ever remain a mystery that he could subject himself to such fetters, instead of yielding to the inspiration which was ever at hand to sublimate into impassioned poetry whatever exact knowledge or whatever learned inquiries might happen to engage his thoughts. Tucker, on the other hand, was a matter of fact person; happy beyond all men in the power of illustrating the obscure by the familiar; but happier still in the most benevolent and cheerful temper, and in a style which beautifully reflects the constitutional gayety and kindness of his heart. There is a charm even in his want of method, and in the very clumsiness of his paragraphs; for each sentence bears him testimony that he is too intent on his object to think of any thing else, and that to teach controversialists to understand and to love each other was the single end for which he lived and wrote. Of his metaphysical speculations, the most original and curious is the Inquiry into the Nature and the Operation of Motives. But his excellence consists in the brightness and in the variety of the lights he has thrown round the whole circle of those topics over which natural and revealed religion exercise a common and indivisible dominion. To rid them of mere logomachies, to show how much the fiercest disputants may be unconsciously agreed, to prove how greatly Christianity is misrepresented by many of her opponents, and misunderstood by many of her friends—and, without ever assuming the preacher's office, to explain the depths of the great Christian canon of mutual love as the universal substratum of all moral truth,—this is the duty which he has undertaken, and which he executes, often successfully, and always with such courage, diligence, and vivacity, and with so unbroken a sunshine of a placid and playful temper, as to render the "Light of Nature" one of the most attractive books in our language, both to those who read to be themselves instructed on these questions, and to those who read with a view of imparting such instruction to others.

So judged Paley in the last generation; and such is manifestly the opinion of Archbishop Whately, and of Bishop Coppleston, with many other writers of our own. Amongst the many who have drawn at this fountain, the latest would appear to be the author of "The Physical Theory of a Future Life." Whether he in fact availed himself of the sources of information which we have indicated, or any other of the countless books which treat on the mysteries of the world to which we are all passing, is, however a fact on which it is impossible to advance beyond conjecture. The old and obsolete fashion of commencing a voyage of discovery to any *terra incognita*, by a retrospect of the success or failure of former adventurers, and the still more ancient practice of fencing round the page with references and quotations, were not without their use. It would, however, be captious to complain of the discontinuance, in a single case, of customs so generally laid aside; or to arraign an author as making an unjust pretension to the praise of originality, merely because he does not in terms disavow it. If in this new theory there is little to be found in substance with which those who are inquisitive about such matters were not already familiar, there is at least a systematic completeness and symmetry, in this scheme of a future life, unrivalled even in Abraham Tucker's vision. In order to disclose to mankind the prospect which thus awaits them, it will be necessary to convert our author's didactics into the form of a fragment of his posthumous autobiography—a freedom, for the pardon of which the necessity of the case may be urged; since it seems impossible by any other method to convey any adequate conception of a career which, dazzling as it is in itself, is still further obscured by the brilliant polish of the abstract phraseology in which it is described by him by whom, in imagination at least, it was run. He may, then, be supposed to have revealed the incidents of his immortal existence to the associates of his mortal being, in some such terms as the following:

One universal bewilderment of thought, one passing agony, and all was still. I had emerged from the confines of life, and yet I lived. Time, place, and sensation were extinct. Memory had lost her office, and the activity of my reasoning powers was suspended. Apart from every other being, and entombed in the solitude of my own nature, all my sentient and mental faculties were absorbed and concentrated in one intense perception of self-consciousness. Before me lay expanded, as in a vast panorama, the entire course of my mortal life. I was at once the actor and the spectator of the whole eventful scene; every thought as distinct, every word as articulate, and every incident as fresh as at the moment of their birth. The enigmas of my existence were solved. That material and intellectual mechanism of which, for threescore years and ten, I had been the subject, was laid bare, with all the mutual dependencies of the countless events, great and trivial, of my sublunary days. Grasping at length the threads of that vast labyrinth, I perceived that they had all been woven by the same Divine Artificer. At each step of the way by which I had come, I now traced the intervention of an ever watchful Providence. Complicated and perplexing as the condition of human life had formerly appeared to me, I at length discovered the great ultimate object to which each movement of that intricate apparatus had been designed to minister. I saw that the whole had been one harmonious and comprehensive scheme for purifying the affections of my nature, and invigorating them for nobler and more arduous exercises. I had gone down to Hades, and Deity was there. On earth his existence had been demonstrated. Here it was felt by a consciousness intuitive and irresistible. A prisoner in the flesh, I had been wont to adore the majesty of the Creator. A disembodied spirit, I was awake to the conviction that he exists as the perennial source of happiness, which, concentrated in his own nature, is thence diffused throughout the universe, although in degrees immeasurably distant from each other, and according to laws unsearchable by any finite understanding. Thus imbibing knowledge of myself and of Deity, and alive only to the emotions inspired by this ever-present spectacle, I became the passive recipient of influences instinct with a delight so tranquil, and with a peace so unbroken, that weariness, satiety, and the desire for change appeared to have departed from me for ever.

Change, however, awaited me. So slight and imperfect had been the alliance between my disembodied spirit and the world of matter, that, destitute of all sensation, I had lost all measure of time, and knew not whether ages had revolved, or but a moment had passed away during my isolated state of being. Heir to ten thousand infirmities, the body I had tenanted on earth had returned to the dust, there to be dissolved and recompounded into other forms and new substances. Yet the seminal principle of that mortal frame had adhered to me; and at the appointed season there brooded over it from on high a reproductive and plastic influence. Fearfully and wonderfully as I had been made when a denizen of the world, the chemical affinities, and the complex organization of my animal structure, had borne the impress of decay, of a transitory state, and of powers restricted in their free exercise. Passing all comprehension as had been the wisdom with which it was adapted to the purposes of my sublunary being, those purposes had been ephemeral, and circumscribed within precincts which now seemed to me scarcely wider than those within which the emmet plies her daily task. In the career which was now opening to me, I required a far different instrumentality to give scope to my new faculties, and to accomplish the ends to which I had learned to aspire. Emancipated from the petty cares and the mean pursuits in which, during the period of my humanity, I had been immersed, I now inhabited and informed a spiritual body, not dissimilar in outward semblance to that which I had bequeathed to the worms, but uniform in texture, homogeneous in every part, and drawn from elements blended harmoniously together, into one simple, pure, and uncompounded whole. Into such perfect unison had my mental and my corporeal nature been drawn, that it was not without difficulty I admitted the belief that I was once again clothed with a material integument. Experience was soon to convince me that such an association was indispensable to the use and to the enlargement of my intellectual and moral powers.

Emerging from the region of separate spirits into my next scene of activity and social intercourse, I found myself an inhabitant of the great luminary, around which Mercury and his more distant satellites eternally revolve. In all their unmitigated radiance were floating around me, those effulgent beams of light and heat which so faintly visit the obscure and distant planets. Everlasting day, the intense glories of an endless summer noon, rested on the numbers without number of intelligent and sentient creatures who shared with me my new abode. Incorruptible, exempt from lassitude, and undesirous of repose, they imbibed energy from rays which in the twinkling of an eye would have dissipated into thin vapour the world and all that it inherits. On that opaque globe, the principles which sustain, and those which destroy life had been engaged within me in a constant but unequal conflict. The quickening spirit on earth, though continually recruited by rest and sleep, had at length yielded to the still-recurring assaults of her more potent adversaries. Here the vital powers had no foes to encounter, and demanded no respite from their ceaseless occupation. In the world below, from man, the universal sovereign, to the animalcula who people a drop of turbid water, I had seen all animated things sustaining themselves by the mutual extermination of each other. In the solar sphere I found all pursuing their appointed course of duty or enjoyment, in immortal youth and undecaying vigour. Death had found no entrance, life demanded no renewal.

I anticipated the results of the observations which I gradually learned to make of the difference between solar and planetary existence; for on my entrance into this untried state of being, my thoughts were long riveted to the change which I had myself undergone. While incarcerated in my tenement of clay, I had given law to my nerves, muscles, and tendons; but they had in turn imposed restraints on me against which it had been vain to struggle. My corporeal mechanism had moved in prompt obedience to each successive mandate of my mind; but so fragile were the materials of which it was wrought, that, yielding to inexorable necessity, my will had repressed innumerable desires which, if matured into absolute volitions, would have rent asunder that frail apparatus. I had relaxed the grasp, and abandoned the chase, and thrown aside the uplifted weapon, as often as my overstrained limbs admonished me that their cords would give way beneath any increased impetus. And when the living power within me had subjected my fibres to the highest pressure which they could safely endure, the arrangement, and the relative position of my joints and muscles, had impeded all my movements, except in some circumscribed and unalterable directions. But my spiritual body, incapable of waste or of fracture, and responsive at every point to the impact of the indwelling mind, advanced, receded, rose or fell, in prompt obedience to each new volition, with a rapidity unimpeded, though not unlimited, by the gravitating influence of the mighty orb over the surface of which I passed. At one time I soared as with the wings of eagles, and at another penetrated the abysses of the deep. The docile and indestructible instrument of my will could outstrip the flight of the swiftest arrow, or rend the knotted oak, or shiver the primeval rocks; and then, contracting its efforts, could weave the threads of the gossamer in looms too subtle and evanescent for the touch of the delica Ariel.

While on earth I had, like Milton, bewailed that constitution of my frame which admitting to knowledge of visible objects only at one entrance, forbade me to converse with them except through the medium of a single nerve, and within the narrow limits of the retina. Had the poet's wish been granted, and if, departing from her benignant parsimony, nature had exposed his sensorium to the full influx of the excitements of which it was inherently susceptible, that insufferable glare would either have annihilated the percipient faculty, or would have quickened it to agonies unimagined even by his daring fancy. Under the shelter of that material structure which at once admitted and mitigated the light, I had in my mortal state been accustomed to point my telescope to the heavens; and, while measuring the curve described round their common centre by stars which to the unaided eye were not even disunited, I had felt how infinitely far the latent capacities of my soul for corresponding with the aspect of the exterior world transcended such powers as could be developed within me, while confined to the inadequate organs of vision afforded me by nature or by art. An immortal, I quaffed at my pleasure the streams of knowledge and of observation for which before I had thus panted in vain. I could now scan and explore at large the whole physical creation. At my will I could call my visual powers into action to the utmost range of their susceptibility; for in my new body I possessed the properties of every different lens in every possible variety of combination—expanding, dissecting, and refracting at any required angle the beams which radiated from the various substances around me, it brought me intelligence of the forms, the colours, and the movements of them all. Assisted by this optical incarnation, I could survey the luminary on which I dwelt, the globes whose orbits were concentric there, and, though less distinctly, the other solar spheres which glowed in the firmament above me. Not more clearly had I deciphered during my sojourn on earth the shapes and hues of the various beings by which it is replenished, than I now discerned the aspect and the movements of the countless species, animate and inanimate, with which the prodigal munificence of creative will has peopled the various planetary regions.

Nor was it through the intervention of light merely, that my altered corporeity brought me into communication with the works of the Divine Architect. It attracted and combined for my study or my delight, all the vibratory movements, and all the gustatory and pungent emanations, by which the sense is aroused and gratified. Celestial harmony floated around me, and I breathed odours such as exhaled from Eden on the fresh dawn of the world's nativity. In that world, chained down by the coarse elements of flesh and blood, I had caught some transient glimpses of exterior things, through the five portals which opened—shall I say into my fortress or my prison-house? From the glorious mansion which my soul now inhabited, pervious to myself at every point, though impregnable to every hostile or unwelcome aggression, I surveyed the things around me in aspects till now unimagined. I did not merely see, and hear, taste, smell, and feel, but I exercised senses for which the languages of earth have no names, and received intimations of properties and conditions of matter unutterable in human discourse. Employing this instrument of universal sensation, the inner forms of nature presented themselves before me as vividly as her exterior types. Thus entering her secret laboratories, I was present at the composition and the blending together of those plastic energies of which mundane philosophy is content to register some few of the superficial results. Each new disclosure afforded me a wider and still lengthening measure of that unfathomable wisdom and power, with the more sublime emanations of which I was thus becoming conversant. Such was the flexibility of my spiritualized organs, that at my bidding they could absolutely exclude every influence from without, leaving me to enjoy the luxuries of meditation in profound and unassailable solitude.

While thus I passed along the solar regions, and made endless accessions of knowledge, I was at first alarmed lest my mind should have been crushed beneath the weight of her own conquests, and the whole should be merged in one chaotic assemblage of confused recollections. From this danger I was rescued by another change in my animal economy. During my planetary existence, the structure and the health of my brain had exercised a despotic authority over my intellectual powers. Then my mind laboured ineffectually over her most welcome tasks, if accident or indigestion relaxed, distended, or compressed my cerebral vessels. For the time, the tools with which she wrought were deprived of their brightness and their edge. At such seasons, (and they were frequent,) the records of past sensations, and of the thoughts associated with them, became illegible in my memory, or could be read there only in disjointed fragments. An acid on his stomach would have rendered vain the boast of Cæsar, that he could address each of his legionaries by name. Even when all my pulses were beating with regularity and vigour, the best I could accomplish was to grope backward through my store of accumulated knowledge, holding by a single thread, to which my attention was confined, and the loss of which defeated all my efforts.

How different the tablets on which my observations of the past were recorded in my spiritual body! Unconscious of fatigue, incapable of decay, and undisturbed by any of those innumerable processes essential to the conservation of mortal life, it enabled me to inscribe in indelible lines, as on some outstretched map, each successive perception, and every thought to which it had given birth. At my pleasure, I could unroll and contemplate the entire chart of my past being. I could render myself as absolutely conscious of the former, as of the present operations of my mind, and at one retrospective glance could trace back to their various fountains all the tributary streams which combined to swell the current of my immediate contemplations. Gliding over the various provinces of the solar world, and gathering in each new treasures of information, I deposited them all beyond the reach of the great spoiler, time, in this ample storehouse of a plenary memory. With the increase of my intellectual hoard, my cravings for such wealth continually augmented. It was an avarice which no gains could satiate, and to the indulgence of which imagination itself could assign no limit.

I should, however, have become the victim of my own avidity for knowledge, if my ideas had still obeyed those laws of association to which, in my telluric state, they had been subject. Then it behooved my reason to exercise a severe and watchful government. When her control was relaxed, my thoughts would break loose from all legitimate restraint. They arranged themselves into strange groups and fantastic combinations, and established with each other such alliances as whim, caprice, or accident suggested. These, once made, were indissoluble. They asserted their power but too often, in resistance to the sternest mandates of my judgment and my will. But in times of debility, of disease, or of sleep, my ideas would combine into heterogeneous masses, seething and mingling together, like the ingredients of some witch's caldron, assembled by her incantations to work out some still more potent spell. Over the whole of this intoxicating confusion presided carnality, in all her nervous, cerebral, vascular, and other forms, and working by means of all her digestive, secretory, and assimilating processes.

No longer the inmate of a tremulous and sordid tabernacle of flesh, but inhabiting a shrine pure and enduring as her own nature, my soul was now rescued from this ignoble thraldom. Accident, appetite, lassitude, the heat and fumes of my animal laboratory, had ceased to disturb the supremacy of reason. Instead of congregating as an undisciplined host, my ideas, as in some stately procession, followed each the other in meet order and predetermined sequence—their march unobstructed by any suggestions or desires originating in my sensuous frame. I had become, not the passive recipient of thought, but the unquestioned sovereign of my own mental operations. The material organs, by the aid of which I now wrought them out, obeyed a law like that on which depends the involuntary movements of the heart and arteries, unattended by any conscious effort, and productive of no fatigue. Every increment of knowledge spontaneously assumed in my memory its proper place and relative position; and the whole of my intellectual resources fell into connected chains of argument or illustration, which I could traverse at pleasure from end to end, still finding the mutual dependence and adhesion of each successive link unbroken.

To contemplate any truth in all the relations in which it stands to every other truth, is to possess the attribute of omniscience; but, in proportion as any created intelligence can combine together her ideas in their various species, genera, classes, and orders, in the same degree is diminished the distance from the Supreme Mind, immeasurable and infinite as the intervening gulf must ever remain. On earth I had been compelled, by the feebleness of my cerebral and nervous economy, to render my studies almost exclusively analytical. There, I had toiled to disencumber every question of whatever might obscure the view of the isolated point proposed as the end of my inquiries. Morals apart from physics, art disunited from logic, the science of numbers and of space detached from the exercise of the imaginative power, even theology itself divorced from the devout aspirations to which she tends, had each in turn engaged my earnest pursuit. But to ascend those heights from which they could be contemplated as parts of one harmonious whole—to seize and to blend together the analogies pervading the works of poets and mathematicians, of naturalists and divines—this was an attempt which convinced me how indissoluble were the fetters which riveted my soul to her sluggish associate. Set free from this bondage, and supplied with an instrument of sensation which kept pace with her own inherent activity, she found and desired no repose. Solar time is measured by the revolutions of the planetary orbs, and from the commencement to the completion of his career through the firmament. Uranus still found me engaged in some unbroken contemplation. During that interval I had completed some vast synthesis, in which were at once combined and distinguished all the various aspects under which some province of knowledge had disclosed itself to my view. In the nether world, high discourse had been held on the connexion of the sciences; but now I discovered the mutual influence, the interaction, and the simultaneous workings of their different laws. I no longer cultivated the exact sciences as a separate domain, but the most severe physical truth was revealed to me in union with the richest hues of ideal beauty, with the perfection of the imitative arts, with the pure abstractions of metaphysical thought, with narratives both historical and romantic, with the precepts of universal morals, and the mysteries of the Divine government. Ontology—vain-glorious word as used among men—the knowledge of universal being as distinct from species, and of species as harmonized in universal being, was the study which engaged the time and rewarded the labours of immortal minds animating spiritual bodies.

Let not those who boast themselves in logic, Aristotelian or Baconian, assume that their puny architecture of syllogistic or inductive reasoning affords the rules by which the soul, rescued from the hindrances of a carnal corporeity, erects for herself edifices of knowledge, immovable in their base, beautiful in their proportions, and towering in splendid domes and pinnacles to the skies.

To Newton and to Pascal the theories of the vulgar geometry were as instinctly obvious as the preliminary axioms on which they rest While yet an infant, Mozart was possessed of all those complex harmonies which a life of patient study scarcely reveals to inferior masters of his art. In my planetary existence, I had rejoiced in my habitual aptitude for physiology and historical researches, nor had I regretted the years of ceaseless toil devoted to them. Now, I discovered that in myself, as in the great men I have mentioned, the apprehensiveness of truth depended far more on the animal than the mental framework. Quick and vigorous in high bodily health, and sluggish and inert under the pressure of corporeal debility, I learned that logic, experiment, and calculation, had been but so many crutches to assist the movements of the halt and feeble; and that, with a physical instrumentality which study could not exhaust nor disease assail, intuition took the place of reasoning. I became rather the conscious witness than the agent of the process by which consequences were evolved from the premises brought under my notice.

In the society of which I had become a member, as in mundane communities, discourse was amongst the chief springs both of improvement and delight. So curiously fashioned was the integument within which my mind was enveloped, that, after the manner of an eyelid, it could either exclude the access of any external excitement, creating within me an absolute and impregnable solitude, or lay open to the immediate survey of an associate any thought or combination of thoughts which I desired to impart to him. I had acquired two distinct languages, one of visible signs, the other of audible symbols. The first was analogous to the mute dialogue which is carried on in pantomime, by gesture and the varying expressions of the countenance; though, unlike such discourse, it was exempt from all conjectural and ambiguous meanings. As in a camera obscura, my corporeal organs reflected the workings of the informing spirit; so that, like the ancient Peruvians, I could converse as by a series of pictures, produced and shifted with instantaneous rapidity. This mode of communication served my turn when I had any occurrences to relate, or any question to discuss, of which sensuous objects formed the basis. But when phenomena purely psychological, destitute of all types in the material creation, were to be conveyed to a companion, I had audible symbols, by which every intellectual conception, and each fluctuating state of moral sentiment might be expressed as distinctly as geometrical diagrams express the corresponding ideas to which they are allied. By the intermixture of pictorial and symbolical speech, I could thus render myself intelligible throughout the whole range and compass of my mental operations, and could give utterance to all those subtle refinements of thought or of sensation, which, even amongst those who spoke the vernacular tongue of Plato, must, from the want of fit and determinate indications have either died away in silence, or have been exhaled in some mystic and unintelligible jargon. Whatever distinctness of expression the pencil or vibratory chords enabled Raphael or Handel to give to their sublime but otherwise ineffectual conceptions, I had thus the power to impart to each modification of thought, and to every shade of feeling. Verbal controversies, sophistry, and all the other "idols of the cavern," had disappeared. Philosophy and her legitimate issue, *wisdom, piety,* and *love,* were cultivated and treasured up by each member of the great solar family, not as a private hoard, to minister only to his own uses, but as a fund universally communicable, and still augmenting by constant interchange.

It is difficult, or impossible, to speak intelligibly, in the language of men, of the delights or of the duties of the state of being into which I had thus entered. Borne along in the vehicle of my spiritual body, I dreaded no fatigue, and was deterred by no danger in the discharge of the most arduous enterprises. Aspects of the creation, hidden from me while garmented in the gross elements of flesh and blood, now burst on my perception as light visits him who, in mature life, for the first time acquires the visual faculty. Through each new avenue of sense thus successively opened to me, my soul, with raptures such as seraphs feel, drew in from the still-expanding circumference wonder and delight, and an ever-increasing consciousness of the depths of her own being and resources. Contemplating the hidden forms and the occult mechanism of the material universe, I left behind me the problems with which physical science is conversant, and advanced to that higher philosophy which investigates the properties of spiritual agents; and to a theology, compared with which that which I had hitherto acquired was as insignificant as the inarticulate babblings of the cradle. My retrospective consciousness—for memory it can scarcely be called—spread out before me scenes, the bright, harmonious, and placid lights of which were mellowed though unobscured by distance. Misgivings as to the stability of my own opinions had fled away, as the truths with which I was engaged presented themselves to me simultaneously in their relative bearings and mutual dependence. Love, pure and catholic, warmed and expanded my heart, as thoughts wise, equitable, and benign, flowed from other minds into my own in a continuous stream; the pellucid waters of which, in the inherent transparency of our regenerate nature, no deceit could darken and no guile pollute. My corporeal fabric, now become the passive instrument of my will, importuned me with no unwelcome intrusions; but buoyant, flexible, and instinct with life and vigour, obeyed every volition, and obstructed the accomplishment of none.

Yet had I not passed into that torpid Elysium of which some have dreamed, and over the descriptions of which many more have slumbered. Virtue, and her stern associate, Self-control, exact obedience not from the denizens of earth alone, but from the rational inhabitants of every province of the universal empire. With each accession of knowledge and of mental power, my view became continually wider and more extended of that gulf, which stretching out in measureless infinitude, separates the Source of Being from the most exalted of his intelligent offspring. My affiance in the Divine wisdom and rectitude, reposing on foundations deep and firm in proportion to my larger acquaintance with the ways of Providence, was still necessary to sustain my trembling spirit as I meditated on the mysteries of the Divine government. For, within the reach of my observation, were discernible agonizing intensities of suffering, abysses of pollution and of guilt, attesting the awful powers both of endurance and of activity of minds ejected from the defences, and despoiled of the narcotics, once afforded them by their animal structure. Awakened to a sense of their inherent though long-slumbering energies, they were captives. Exposed to every painful excitement by which the sentient faculty can be stimulated, they were naked. Reading on the face of nature inscriptions till now illegible, they saw in them their own condemnation. Remembering each incident of their former existence, they found in each fresh aliment for despair. Disabused of the illusions of sophistry and self-love, truth shed on them the appalling glare of inevitable light. Interchanging thoughts without the possibility of disguise, every foul and malignant desire diffused among them a deadly contagion. Destitute of any separate wants or interests, their bodies could no longer minister to them the poor relief of an alternation of distress. The reluctant and occasional spectator of such woes, I found in faith, and hope, and meek adoration, the solace which my labouring spirit required—a task commensurate with my now elevated powers, though the firmest and the holiest of mortals, while yet detained in his tenement of flesh, would have been crushed and maddened beneath the burden of that fearful sight.

In the schools of the world, I had wandered in the endless mazes of fate and free-will, and the origin of evil. An inhabitant of the great celestial luminary, I became aware of relations till then unheard of and inconceivable; between the Emanative Essence and the hosts of subordinate spirits, and of questions thence resulting, of such strange and mighty import, that, prostrating myself before the wisdom and benevolence of the Most High, I was still compelled, in reverential awe, to acknowledge how inscrutable even to my expanded capacity was the thick darkness which shrouds his secret pavilion.

Nor were there wanting tasks, which summoned to the utmost height of daring the most courageous of the inhabitants of the sphere to which I had been translated. Glorious recompense was to be won by deeds such as immortal beings only could undertake or meditate. Ministers of the Supreme, we braved at his bidding the privation of all other joys in the delight of prompt obedience to his will. We waged with his enemies fierce conflicts, and exposed ourselves to ills, intense during their continuance, in proportion to the exquisite sensibilities of our purified corporeity. Impelled by irresistible compassion, by the cravings of insatiable benevolence, or by the vehement desire to obtain or to impart tidings affecting the happiness of our own or of other orders of thinking beings, our active powers, with all our resources of constancy, magnanimity, and prudence, were called into habitual exercise; nor were there wanting dignities to be attained, or sceptres to be won, as the meet reward of illustrious achievements.

When Astolpho descended on the hippogriff from his lunar voyage, his first employment was to disenchant the infuriate knight, on whose deliverance he had been bent when an ill-timed curiosity led him so far a-field. Even so, returning from the solar sphere to which the theory of a future life has unexpectedly conducted us, we must dissolve the fiction under which we have thus far proceeded, and restore the theorist himself to his sublunary life, which he is so well able to enjoy and to improve. No longer the imaginary biographers either of his terrestrial or his celestial career, but mere contemporary critics, we must exempt him from all responsibility for so much as a single word of this narrative of his immortal existence. It exhibits, with at least no intentional inaccuracy, the substance of anticipations, which, if regarded but as a chapter in some new Atlantus, might be borne with as indulgently as other Utopian discoveries, which the world has been none the worse for contrasting with the genuine but vapid pleasures of this transitory state. That a veil absolutely impenetrable conceals from us the realities of that condition into which all the successive generations of men have passed, and into which we are following them, no one will seriously dispute. But neither can it be denied that to penetrate that dark abyss is at once a desire which has been felt, and an attempt which has been made by every race, nay almost by every individual of our species.

If Scipio had his dream of colloquies after death with the wise and good of all ages, the Esquimaux has his heaven where seal-skins may be procured in placid seas, and undying lamps are fed with inexhaustible supplies of the odorous grease of bears. Mahomet promised his Arabian converts "rivers of incorruptible water and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changeth not; gardens planted with shady trees, in each of which shall be two flowing fountains; couches, the linings whereof shall be of thick silk interwoven with gold, and beauteous damsels, refraining their eyes from beholding any but their spouses, having complexions like rubies and pearls, and fine black eyes." The stream can rise no higher than the fountain. Our ideas of immortal good are but amplifications of our mortal enjoyments. To sublimate our conceptions of felicity, by associating together all innocent and not incompatible delights, and by subtracting from them every alloy of pain, satiety, and languor, is to create for ourselves the only heaven with the contemplation of which hope can be sustained and activity invigorated. He who carefully surveys the Elysium which reason or imagination has laid out and planted for him in the next world, will acquire far better acquaintance with the "happy gardens" to which choice or fortune has directed him in this. Judged by this standard, and giving him credit for having made his public confessions with entire candour, the author of the "Theory of a Future Life" may be esteemed a wise and happy man—wise, because he has no fear of acknowledging to himself or to others the dependence of his spiritual on his animal economy, and affects no superhuman disdain of mere bodily gratifications; and happy, because his felicity consists in bringing the body into that unresisting servitude to the mind, without which freedom and serenity are but empty words. Such as is his paradise in the highest conceivable degree, such in the highest attainable degree must be his earthly Eden. Dismiss it if you will as a midsummer night's dream; yet must it be confessed that it is such a dream as could visit no slumbers but those of one whose fancy was pure from sensual defilement, and whose intellect had been trained to active exercise and to close self-observation. Or, give the theorist credit for nothing more than having skilfully selected the most alluring possibilities of future good from the many celestial schemes with which the poetry and the poetical prose of all ages abounds, and still it will be true that the choice has been guided by opinions such as every one would wish to adopt, and by tastes which in our better moments we should all desire to gratify. The time subtracted, for such visions, from the scarcely more substantial delights among which we are living, will send us back to the cares of life, not less fitted resolutely to endure them, and to the pleasures of life, not less prepared wisely to enjoy them.

Style in literature is like manner in society—the superficial index, which all can read, of internal qualities which few can decipher. If the author of these books had cared, or had been able, to write with ease and simplicity, or had he disguised his meaning under spasmodic contortions, or had he talked over these grave matters in the tone of a blunt and sagacious humourist, or had he dissolved them in religious sentiment, or flattened them down to the level of a monotonous orthodoxy; in short, had he either risen to the graces of nature, or condescended to those of affectation, he would have had more numerous and enthusiastic admirers. Language in his hands is an instrument of wonderful volume, flexibility, and compass; but produces harmonies of such recondite elaboration, that the sense aches for the even flow of a few plain words quietly taking their proper places. Felicitious expression is an excellent thing in its season; but serve up a whole octavo full of exquisite sentences, and neither the guest nor the cook himself can clearly tell what the repast is made of. In the works of the historian of Enthusiasm, as in those of Dr. Channing, penury and affluence of thought are made to look so like each other, that they must be undressed in order to be distinguished; and while he is making out which is which, the courteous reader is apt to lose his courtesy. In proportion as he is the more profound thinker of the two, the Englishman is the more to be upbraided for the perverse ingenuity which thus mars his own success. Objects so elevated as his, should not have been exposed to such hazard. What those objects are has already been partly explained, but they demand additional illustration.

Secluded from the worlds of business and of literature, but a keen observer of both, and viewing all sublunary things in their bearing on the eternal welfare of mankind, our author mourned over the low estate of theology *amongst us,* and of those higher intellectual pursuits with which theology maintains an indissoluble connexion. We are constrained to doubt whether his regrets are as wisely indulged as they are eloquently expressed.

Christianity is for the daily use of homely people. Precepts affecting all the happiness of this life, and doctrines involving all the interests of the next, are not to be delivered in that honeyed discourse which steeps the soul in self-oblivion. When truth appears amongst mankind in her severe and native majesty, she rejects the services of her accustomed handmaids, erudition, poetry, rhetoric, philosophy and criticism. Eloquence alone attends her, but it is an eloquence of which the mere words are unheeded—a weapon of such edge and temper as to be irresistible in the grasp of the feeblest hand.

And feeble indeed are many of those which attempt to draw this durindana from the scabbard. Malignity itself cannot accuse our pulpits and theological presses of beguiling us by the witchcraft of genius. They stand clear of the guilt of ministering to the disordered heart the anodynes of wit or fancy. Abstruse and profound sophistries are not in the number of their offences. It is a mere calumny, to accuse them of lulling the conscience to repose by any Syren songs of imagination. If the bolts of inspired truth are diverted from their aim, it is no longer by enticing words of man's wisdom. Divinity fills up her weekly hour by the grave and gentle excitement of an orthodox discourse, or by toiling through her narrow round of systematic dogmas, or by creeping along some low level of schoolboy morality, or by addressing the initiated in mythic phraseology; but she has ceased to employ lips such as those of Chrysostom or Bourdaloue. The sanctity of sacred things is lost in the familiar routine of sacred words. Religion has acquired a technology, and a set of conventional formulas, torpifying those who use and those who hear them. Her literature also bears the impress of an age in which the art of writing has well-nigh proved fatal to the power of thinking; when the desire to appropriate gracefully has superseded the ambition to originate profoundly; when the commercial spirit envelopes and strangles genius in its folds; when demigods and heroes have abandoned the field; and the holiest affections of the heart die away in silence; and the ripest fruits of the teeming mind drop ungathered into the reaper's bosom;—an age of literary democracy and intellectual socialism, in which no bequests are made to remote posterities, and no structures are rising to command and break the universal mediocrity.

From the retirement which he knows so well how to describe and to enjoy, our author casts a mournful gaze round this dreary horizon. Acquainted, perhaps, but too distinctly with the religious parties of his native land—their infirmities and their faults, he longed for the advent of a more catholic spirit, of a more intense and unostentatious piety, and of theological studies animated by some nobler impulse than the hire of booksellers or the praise of ephemeral critics. By expostulation and by example he has endeavoured thus to regenerate the national character. Nor are the qualifications which he has devoted to this enterprise of an ordinary kind. Measured by Etonian and Christchurch standards, he may not be entitled to a place amongst accomplished scholars; but he possesses stores of knowledge which might atone, could such guilt admit of expiation, even for the crime of a false quantity. Familiar with the elements, at least, of all physical science, and intimately conversant with ecclesiastical history, he has explored the enigmas of the human heart, even too deeply for his own repose. His bosom yearned, and his mind toiled for the happiness of mankind; but his labours would seem not to be well sustained by the cheering influence of hope. He loves children, for they are as yet exempt from the prevailing degeneracy; and the face of nature, for it reflects the creative intelligence; and books, for they are the depositories of human wisdom; and the universal church, for it is the ark freighted with the best treasures, and charged with the destinies of our race. Man also he loves, but with feelings pensive if not melancholy, and fastidious even when most benignant. In his many books, there is not a tinge of spleen; but they exhibit that disgust for the follies and the vices of the world, which with some is the aliment of satire, with others a fascination alluring them to the very evils they despise, with a few, amongst whom our author must take his place, at once a summons to exertion and a motive to sadness.

Casting off these depressing influences, he has devoted all the resources of a comprehensive understanding, and all the affections of a benevolent heart, to correct the general debasement, and to exhibit a model of those higher pursuits to which he would reclaim his generation. Enthusiasts, fanatics, spiritual despots, sciolists in education—pastors who slumber within the fold, and the robbers who spoil it, form a confederacy, the assailant of which should be encouraged by the gratitude of all good men. If the soul of William Cowper has transmigrated into any human frame, it is that of the historian of Enthusiasm. Not, indeed, that the poet has found a successor in the magic art of establishing a personal and affectionate intimacy between himself and his readers. There is no new fireside like that of Olney round which we can gather; nor any walks like those of Western Underwood, of which we are the companions; nor a heart at once broken and playful, whose sorrows and amusements are our own; nor are we surrounded by a family group, with tame hares, spaniels, bird-cages, and knitting-needles, as familiar to us as those of our own boyhood, and almost as dear,—each in turn reflecting the gentle, thoughtful, elevated mind of him to whom they belonged, in all its vicissitudes of despondency and hope, of grave wisdom, and of mirth as light and pure as that of infancy. This is the high prerogative of genius, addressing mankind at large through the vernacular idiom of one land in the universal language of all.

But Stamford Rivers, the dwelling-place of the anonymous writer of these volumes, has given birth to a succession of efforts to exalt the national character, which might vie with those of Olney and of Weston in piety and earnestness, in genuine freedom of thought, in the relish for domestic pleasures, and for all the innocent delights of life, in the filial love of God, and the brotherly love of man. Learning and logical acumen, and a certain catholicity of mind, which the poet neither possessed nor needed, impart to the works of the essayist a charm, without which it is vain, in these days, to interfere in the debates which agitate society. There is a charm, too, even in his distaste for the pursuits most in request amongst us; for it springs from the grandeur of the ideal excellence by which his imagination is possessed. Omniscience, though veiling its intimations in the coarse mantle of human language, will still emit some gleams of that radiance which illumines the regions of the blessed; and these he would reverently gather and concentrate. There is in Christianity an expansive power, sometimes repressed but never destroyed; and that latent energy he strives to draw forth into life and action. Those mysteries which shroud the condition and the prospects of our race, however inscrutable to the slaves of appetite, are not absolutely impervious to a soul purified by devout contemplation; and to these empyreal heights he aspires at once to point and to lead the way. To him whose foot is firmly planted on the eternal verities of heaven, there belong motives of such force, and a courage, so undaunted, as should burst through all resistance; and he calls on those who enjoy this high privilege to assert their native supremacy above the sordid ambition, the frivolities, and the virulence of the lower world. The voice thus raised in expostulation will die away, not unheeded by the interior circle he addresses, nor unblessed by a meet recompense; but unrewarded, we fear, by the accomplishment of these exalted purposes. Eloquent as is the indignation with which our anonymous monitor regards the low level to which divine and human literature has fallen amongst us, and mean as is his estimate of the pursuits with which the men of his own days are engaged, a hope may perhaps, without presumption, be indulged, that less fastidious and not less capable judges will pronounce a more lenient sentence on us and on our doings.

In the great cycle of human affairs there are many stages, each essential to the consummation of the designs of Providence, and each separated by broad distinctions from the rest. They whose province it is to censure, and they whose desire it is to improve their age, will never find their sacred fires extinct from the mere want of fuel. History and theory are always at hand with humiliating contrasts to the times we live in. That men have been better or might be better than they are, has been true since the first fathers of our race returned to their native dust, and will still be true as long as our planet shall be inhabited by their descendants. But below the agitated surface of the ocean, under-currents are silently urging forward, on their destined path, the waters of the mighty deep, themselves impelled by that Power which none may ques tion or resist. Human society obeys a similar influence. Laws as anomalous in appearance, as uniform in reality, as those which direct the planetary movements, determine the present state, and regulate the progress of commonwealths, whether, political, literary, or religious. Christianity demands the belief, and experience justifies the hope, that their ultimate tendency is towards the universal dominion of piety and virtue. But it is neither pious nor rational to suppose, that this consummation can be attained by any sequence of identical causes constantly working out similar effects. The best generations, like the best men, are those which possess an individual and distinctive character. A chain of splendid biographies constitutes the history of past centuries. Whoever shall weave the chronicles of our own, must take for his staple statistics illuminated by a skilful generalization. Once every eye was directed to the leaders of the world; now all are turned to the masses of which it is composed. Instead of Newtons presiding over royal societies, we have Dr. Birkbecks lecturing at mechanics' institutes. If no Wolseys arise to found colleges like that of Christ Church, Joseph Lancaster and William Bell have emulated each other in works not less momentous at the Borough Road and Baldwin's Gardens. We people continents, though we have ceased to discover them. We abridge folios for the many, though we no longer write them for the few. Our fathers compiled systems of divinity—we compose pocket theological libraries. They invented sciences, we apply them. Literature was once an oligarchy, it is now a republic. Our very monitors are affected with the degeneracy they deplore. For the majestic cadence of Milton, and the voluptuous flow of Jeremy Taylor's periods, they substitute the rhetorical philosophy, invented some fifty years since, to countervail the philosophical rhetoric of the French Revolution; and put forth, in a collection of essays for the drawing-room, reproofs which the hands of Prynne would have moulded into learned, fierce, and ponderous folios.

It is impossible to prevent—is it wise to bewail, this change in our social and intellectual habits? During the inundations of the Nile, the worship of the mysterious river ceased, and no hymns were heard to celebrate its glories. Idolatry lost its stay, and imagination her excitement; but the land was fertilized. Learning, once banked up in universities and cathedrals, is now diffused through shops and factories. The stream, then so profound and limpid, may now, perhaps, be both shallow and muddy. But is it better that the thirst of a whole nation should be thus slaked, or that the immortals should be quaffing their nectar apart in sublime abstraction from the multitude? There is no immediate and practicable reconcilement of these advantages. Genius, and wit, and science, and whatever else raises man above his fellows, must bend to the universal motives of human conduct. When honour, wealth, public gratitude, and the sense of good desert, reward those who teach elementary truth to the people at large, the wisest and the best will devote to that office powers, which, in a different age, would have been consecrated to more splendid, though not perhaps to more worthy undertakings.

In the state of letters, there is no maintaining a polity in which the three elements of power are blended together in harmonious counterpoise. There a monarch infallibly becomes a despot, and a democracy subjugates to itself whatever else is eminent, or illustrious. Divines, poets, and philosophers, addressing millions of readers and myriads of critics, are immediately rewarded by an applause, or punished by a neglect, to which it is not given to mortal man to be superior or indifferent. Inform the national mind, and improve the general taste up to a certain point, and to that point you inevitably depress the efforts of those who are born to instruct the rest. Had Spenser flourished in the nineteenth century, would he have aspired to produce the Faery Queen? Had Walter Scott lived in the sixteenth, would he have condescended to write the Lady of the Lake? Our great men are less great because our ordinary men are less abject. These lamentations over the results of this compromise are rather pathetic than just. It forms one indispensable chapter in the natural history of a people's intellectual progress. It is one of the stages through which the national mind must pass towards the general elevation of literature, sacred and profane. We know not how to regret, that genius has from the moment abdicated her austere supremacy, and stooped to be popular and plain. Mackintosh surrendered his philosophy to the compilation of a familiar history of England. Faithless to his Peris and Glendoveers, Mr. Moore is teaching the commonalty of the realm the sad tale of the woes inflicted on the land of his birth. No longer emulous of Porson, the Bishop of London devotes his learned desire to preparing cheap and easy lessons for the householders of his diocess. Lord Brougham arrests the current of his eloquence, to instruct mechanics in the principles of the sciences which they are reducing to daily practice. Tracts for the times are extorted from the depositories of ecclesiastical tradition, obedient to the general impulse which they condemn, and constrained to render the Church argumentative, that they may render her oracular. Nay, the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm" himself, despite his own protests, yields at length to the current, and has become the periodical writer of monthly tracts, where, in good round controversial terms, the superficial multitude are called to sit in judgment on the claims of the early fathers to sound doctrine, good morals, and common sense. Let who will repine at what has passed, and at what is passing, if they will allow us to rejoice in what is to come. If we witness the growth of no immortal reputations, we see the expansion of universal intelligence. The disparities of human understanding are much the same in all times; but it is when the general level is the highest that the mighty of the earth rise to the most commanding eloquence.

But whatever may be the justice of the hopes we thus indulge for future generations, our business is with ourselves. If, as we think, they are well judging who devote the best gifts of nature and of learning to the instruction of the illiterate, the praise of wisdom is not to be denied to such as write with the more ambitious aim of stimulating the nobler intellects amongst us to enterprises commensurate with their elevated powers.

No strenuous effort for the good of mankind was ever yet made altogether in vain; nor will those of our author be fruitless, though the results may fall far short of his aspirations. The general currents of thought and action can never be diverted from their channels, except by minds as rarely produced as they are wonderfully endowed. Energy, decision, and a self-reliance, independent of human praise or censure, are amongst their invariable characteristics. To this sublime order of men the Recluse of Stamford Rivers does not belong. Nor can a place be assigned to him among those calmer spirits, whose inventive genius, or popular eloquence, has enabled them from their solitudes to cast on the agitated masses of society seeds of thought destined at some future period to change the aspect of human affairs. He is an independent more than an original thinker. He is rather exempt from fear than animated by ardent courage in announcing the fruits of his inquiries. A great master of language, he is himself but too often mastered by it. He is too much the creature, to become the reformer, of his age. His assiduity to please is fatal to his desire to command. His efforts to move the will are defeated by his success in dazzling the fancy. Yet his books exhibit a character, both moral and intellectual, from the study of which the reader can hardly fail to rise a wiser and a better man. Standing aloof from all vulgar excitements, heedless of the transient politics and the fugitive literature of his times, and intent only on the permanent interests of mankind, he has laboured to promote them with an honest love of truth, aided by brilliant talents, comprehensive knowledge, and undaunted intrepidity. And thus he has come under the guidance of principles, which no man can cultivate in his own bosom, or earnestly impart to other minds, without earning a reward which will render human applause insignificant, or reduce the neglect of the world to a matter of comparative indifference.

THE PORT-ROYALISTS.*

[Edinburgh Review, 1841.]

All religions, and all ages, have their saints; their men of unearthly mould; self-conquerors; sublime even in their errors; not altogether hateful in their very crimes. If a man would understand the dormant powers of his own nature, let him read the *Acta Sanctorum*. Or, if "too high this price of knowledge," let him at least acquaint himself with the legends of the later heroes of the Gallican church. Of all ascetics they were the least repulsive. They waged war on dullness with the ardour of Dangeau and St. Simon, and with still better success. While macerating their bodies in the cloisters of Port-Royal, they did not cease to be French men and French women of the Augustan age. While practising the monastic virtue of silence their social spirit escaped this unwelcome restraint, in a body of memoirs as copious as those which record the splendour and the miseries of Versailles. In a series of volumes, of which the above is the first, the author is about to tell their story in the language (vernacular and erudite) of his country and his times. A rapid sketch of it may be of use in directing the attention of our readers to one of the most remarkable episodes in ecclesiastical history.

He whose journey lies from Versailles to Chevreuse, will soon find himself at the brow of a steep cleft or hollow, intersecting the monotonous plain across which he has been passing. The brook which winds through the verdant meadows beneath him, stagnates into a large pool, reflecting the solitary Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dove-cot, which rise from its banks; with the farmhouse, the decayed towers, the forest-trees, and the innumerable shrubs and creepers which clothe the slopes of the valley. France has many a lovelier prospect, though this is not without its beauty; and many a field of more heart-stirring interest, though this, too has been ennobled by heroic daring; but through the length and breadth of that land of chivalry and of song, the traveller will in vain seek a spot so sacred to genius, to piety, and to virtue. That arch is all which remains of the once crowded monastery of Port-Royal. In those woods Racine first learned the language—the universal language—of poetry. Under the roof of that humble farmhouse, Pascal, Arnauld, Nicole, De Saci, and Tillemont, meditated those works, which, as long as civilization and Christianity survive, will retain their hold on the gratitude and reverence of mankind. There were given innumerable proofs of the graceful good humour of Henry the Fourth. To this seclusion retired the heroine of the Fronde, Ann Genevieve, Duchess of Longueville, to seek the peace which the world could not give. Madame de Sevigne discovered here a place "tout propre a inspirer le desir de faire son salut"

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* *Reuchlin, Geschichte von Port-Royal. Der Kampf des Reformirten und des Jesuitischen Katholicismus. 1 ter Band: bis zum Todo Angelica Arnauld.* (Reuchlin, History of Port-Royal. The Struggle of the Reformed and the Jesuitical Catholicism. 1st vol.: to the death of Angelique Arnauld.) 8vo. Leipsic, 1839.

From the Petit Trianon and Marly, there came hither to worship God, many a courtier and many a beauty, heart-broken or jaded with the very vanity of vanities—the idolatry of their fellow mortals. Survey French society in the seventeenth century from what aspect you will, it matters not, at Port-Royal will be found the most illustrious examples of what imparted to that motley assemblage any real dignity or permanent regard. Even to the mere antiquarian, it was not without a lively interest.

At the eve of his departure to the conquest of the holy sepulchre, the good knight, Matthieu de Marli, cast a wistful gaze over the broad lands of his ancestors, and intrusted to his spouse, Mathilde de Garlande, the care of executing some work of piety by which to propitiate the Divine favour, and to insure his safe return. A Benedictine monastery, for the reception of twelve ladies of the Cistertian order, was accordingly erected, in imitation of the cathedral at Amiens, and by the same architect. Four centuries witnessed the gradual increase of the wealth and dignity of the foundation. Prelates of the houses of Sully and Nemours enlarged its privileges. Pope Honorius III. authorized the celebration of the sacred office within its walls, even though the whole country should be lying under a papal interdict; and of the host consecrated on the profession of a nun, seven fragments might be solemnly confided to her own keeping, that, for as many successive days, she might administer to herself the holy sacrament. Yet how arrest by spiritual immunities the earthward tendency of all sublunary things? At the close of the reign of Henry IV., the religious ladies of Port-Royal had learned to adjust their "robes a grandes manches" to the best advantage. Promenades by the margin of the lake relieved the tedium of monastic life. Gayer strains of music than those of the choir, might be heard from the adjacent woods; and if a cavalier from Paris or Chevreuse had chanced to pursue his game that way, the fair musicians were not absolutely concealed nor inexorably silent. So lightly sat the burden of their vows on those amiable recluses, that the gayest courtier might well covet for his portionless daughter the rank of their lady abbess.

Such at least was the judgment of M. Marion. He was advocate-general to Henry IV., and maternal grandfather of Jaqueline Marie Angelique and of Agnes Arnauld. Of the arts to the invention of which the moderns may lay claim, that of jobbing is not one. M. Marion obtained from "the father of his people" the *coadjuterie* of the abbey of Port-Royal for the high-spirited Jaqueline, then in her eighth year; and that of St. Cyr for the more gentle Agnes, over whom not more than five summers had passed. The young ladies renounced at once the nursery and the world. A single step conducted them from the leading strings to the veil. Before the completion of her first decade, Angelique, on the death of her immediate predecessor, found herself, in plenary right, the abbess and the ruler of her monastery; and, in attestation of her spiritual espousals, assumed the title and the name of the Mere Angelique, by which she has since been celebrated in the annals of the church.

To the church, however, must not be imputed this breach of ecclesiastical discipline. In the ardour of his parental affections, the learned advocate-general was hurried into acts for which he would have consigned a criminal of lower degree to the galleys. He obtained the requisite bulls from Rome by forged certificates of his granddaughter's age; and to this treason against the holy see, Henry himself was at least an accessary after the fact. Hunting in the valley of Port-Royal, the gay monarch trespassed on the precincts of the sacred enclosure. To repel the royal intruder, a child, bearing in her hand the crosier, which bespoke her high conventional rank, issued from the gates of the abbey at the head of a solemn procession of nuns, and rebuked her sovereign with all the majesty of an infant Ambrose. Henry laughed and obeyed. Marion's detected fraud would seem to have passed for a good practical joke, and for nothing more. In the result, however, no occurrence ever contributed less to the comedy of life, or formed the commencement of a series of events more grave or touching. It would be difficult or impossible to discover, in the history of the church, the name of any woman who has left so deep an impress of her character on the thoughts and the conduct of the Christian commonwealth.

The family of Arnauld held a conspicuous station among the noblesse of Provence, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In a later age, a member of that house enjoyed the singular honour of at once serving Catharine de Medicis as her procureur-general, and of defeating, sword in hand, at the head of his servants, the force sent to assassinate him on the day of St. Bartholomew. Returning to the bosom of the church, which had thus roughly wooed him, he transmitted his fortune and his office to his son, Antoine Arnauld, the husband of Catharine Marion. They were the happy parents of no less than twenty children. Of these the youngest was the great writer who has imparted to the name of Arnauld an imperishable lustre. Five of the daughters of the same house assumed the veil, in the abbey of Port-Royal. Their mother, Catharine Marion, was admitted in her widowed into that society. Pomponne, the minister of Louis XIV.; Le Maitre, unrivalled among the masters of forensic eloquence in France; and De Saci, the author of the best version of the Holy Scriptures into the French language, were three of her grandsons. Before her death, the venerable matron had seen herself surrounded, in the monastery and the adjoining hermitages, by eighteen of her descendants in the first and second generations; nor until the final dispersion of the sisterhood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had the posterity of Antoine and Catharine Arnauld ceased to rule in the house of which Mere Angelique had, seventy years before, been the renowned reformer.

To those who believe that the psychological distinction of the sexes may be traced to physical causes, and that, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, these distinctions will for ever disappear, the character of Angelique is less perplexing than to the advocates of the opposite theory. Her understanding, her spirit, and her resolves, were all essentially masculine. She was endued with the various faculties by which man either extorts or wins dominion over his fellow-men;—with address, courage, fortitude, self-reliance, and an unfaltering gaze fixed on objects at once too vast to be measured and remote to be discerned but by the all-searching eye of faith. Among the Israelites of old, she would have assumed the office of judge; or would have given out oracles in the forests of ancient Germany.

Born in the reign, and educated near the court, of a Bourbon, the lighter and more gentle elements of her nature found exercise even under the paralyzing influences of an ascetic life; for Angelique was gay and light of heart, and St. Benedict himself might have forgiven or applauded the playful sallies of his votary. In scaling the heights of devotion, she could call to her own aid, and that of others, all the resources of the most plaintive or impassioned music. To flowers, and to the glad face of nature, she gave back their own smiles with a true woman's sympathy. With such literature as might be cultivated within the walls of her convent, she was intimately conversant; and would have eclipsed Madame de Sevigne's epistolary fame, had it been permitted to her to escape from theological into popular topics. Concentrated within a domestic circle, and bestowed on a husband or a child, the affections, which she poured out on every human being who claimed her pity, would have burned with a flame as pure and as intense as was ever hymned in poetry or dreamed of in romance. A traveller on the highways of the world, she must have incurred every peril except that of treading an obscure and inglorious path. Immured by superstition in a cloister, she opened the way at once to sublunary fame and to an immortal recompense; and has left an example as dangerous as it may be seductive to feebler minds, who, in a desperate imitation of such a model, should hazard a similar self-devotion.

Angelique, indeed, might be fitted for a nunnery; for such was the strength, and such the sacred harmony of her spirit, that while still a sojourner on earth, she seemed already a denizen of heaven. When a child, she understood as a child; enjoying the sports, the rambles, and the social delights which the habits of Port-Royal had not then forbidden. With advancing years came deeper and more melancholy thoughts. She felt, indeed, (how could she but feel?) the yearnings of a young heart for a world where love and homage awaited her. But those mysteries of our being, of which the most frivolous are not altogether unconscious, pressed with unwonted weight on her. A spouse of Christ; a spiritual mother of those who sustained the same awful character—her orisons, her matins, and her vesper chants, accompanied by unearthly music and by forms of solemn significance; the Gothic pile beneath which she sat enthroned; and the altar where, as she was taught, the visible presence of her Redeemer was daily manifested—all spoke to her of a high destiny, a fearful responsibility, and of objects for which all sublunary ties might well be severed, and a sacrifice wisely made of every selfish feeling. Nor need a Protestant fear to acknowledge, that on a heart thus consecrated to the service of her Maker, rested the holy influence, familiar to all who meekly adore the great source of wisdom, and reverently acquiesce in his will. As a science, religion consists in the knowledge of the relations between God and man; as a principle, in the exercise of the corresponding affections; as a rule of duty, in the performance of the actions which those affections prescribe. The principle may thrive in healthful life and energy, though the science be ill understood and the rule imperfectly apprehended. For, after all, the great command is Love; and He from whom that command proceeded, is himself Love; and amidst all the absurdities (for such they were) of her monastic life, Angelique was still conscious of the presence of a Father, and found the guidance of a friend.

When at the age of eleven years, Angelique became the abbess of Port-Royal, few things were less thought of by the French ladies of the Cistertian order than the rule of their austere founder. During the wars of the League, religion, by becoming a watchword, had almost ceased to be a reality; civil war, the apology for every crime, had debased the national character; and the profligacy of manners which the last generation expiated by their sufferings, may be distinctly paid back to the age of which Davila has written the political, and Bassompierre the social history. Society will still exert a powerful influence even over those by whom it has been abandoned. When Gabrielle d'Etrees reigned at the Louvre, beads were told and masses sung in neighbouring cloisters, by vestals who, in heathen Rome, would have been consigned to a living sepulchre. In a monastery, the spiritual thermometer ranges from the boiling to the freezing point with but few intermediate pauses. From the ecstasies of devotion there is but one step to disgust, and thence to sensuality, for most of those who dare to forego the aids to piety and virtue which divine wisdom has provided in the duties and the affections of domestic life.

While this downward progress was advancing at Port-Royal, it happened that a Capuchin friar sought and obtained permission to preach there. Of the man himself, the chroniclers of the house have left a scandalous report; but they gratefully acknowledge the efficacy of his sermon. Angelique listened, and was converted. Such, at least, is her own statement; and unstirred be all the theological questions connected with it. How deep was the impression on her mind, may be gathered from her own words;—"Often," she exclaims, "did I wish to fly a hundred leagues from the spot, and never more to see my father, mother, or kindred, dearly as I love them. My desire was to live apart from every one but God, unknown to any human being, concealed and humble, with no witness but himself, with no desire but to please him." Her dignity as abbess she now regarded as a burden. Even her projected reforms had lost their interest. To live where her holy aspirations would be thwarted, and where examples of holiness would *not* be found, was to soar to a more arduous, and therefore a more attractive sphere of self-denial.

That such fascinations should dazzle a young lady in her seventeenth year, is, it must be confessed, no very memorable prodigy; but to cherish no ineffectual emotions was one of the characteristics of the Mère Angelique, as it is, indeed, of all powerful minds. To abdicate her ecclesiastical rank, and by breathing a tainted moral atmosphere, to nourish by the force of contrast the loftier Christian graces, were purposes ultimately executed, though for awhile postponed. She paused only till the sisterhood of Port-Royal should have acquired, from her example or teaching, that sanctity of manners in which her creed informed her that the perfection of our nature consists. To the elder ladies, the prospect had few charms. But the will of their young abbess prevailed. They laid at her feet their separate possessions, abandoned every secular amusement, and, closing the gates of their monastery against all strangers, retired to that uninterrupted discharge of their spiritual exercises to which their vows had consigned them. Much may be read, in the conventual annals, of the contest with her family to which the Mère Angelique was exposed by the last of these resolutions. On a day, subsequently held in high esteem as the "Journée du Guichet," her parents and M. D'Andilly, her eldest brother, were publicly excluded, by her mandate, from the hallowed precincts, despite their reproaches and their prayers, and the filial agonies of her own heart. That great sacrifice accomplished, the rest was easy. Poverty resumed his stern dominion. Linen gave place to the coarsest woollens. Fasting and vigils subdued the lower appetites; and Port-Royal was once more a temple whence the sacrifices of devotion rose with an unextinguished flame to heaven, thence, as it was piously believed, to draw down an unbroken stream of blessings to earth.

Far different were the strains that arose from the neighbouring abbey of Maubisson, under the rule of Mde. d'Etrees. That splendid mansion, with its dependent baronies and forests, resembled far more the palace and gardens of Armida, than a retreat sacred to penitence and prayer. She was the sister of the too famous Gabrielle, to whose influence with Henry she was indebted for this rich preferment. Indulging without restraint, not merely in the luxuries but in the debaucheries of the neighbouring capitol, she had provoked the anger of the king, and the alarm of the general of the order. A visitation of the house was directed. Madame d'Etrees, imprisoned the visiters, and well-nigh starved them. A second body of delegates presented themselves. Penances, at least when involuntary, were not disused at Maubisson. The new commissioners were locked up in a dungeon, regaled with bread and water, and soundly whipped every *morning*. Supported by a guard, the general himself then hazarded an encounter with the formidable termagant. He returned with a whole skin, but boasted no other advantage. Next appeared at the abbey gates a band of archers. After two days of fruitless expostulations, they broke into the enclosure. Madame now changed her tactics. She took up a defensive position, till then unheard of in the science of strategy. In plain terms, she went to bed. A more embarrassing manœuvre was never executed by Turenne or Condé. The siege was turned into a blockade. Hour after hour elapsed; night succeeded to day, and day to night; but still the abbess was recumbent—unapparelled, unapproachable. Driven thus to choose between a ludicrous defeat and a sore scandal, what Frenchman could longer hesitate? Bed, blankets, abbess and all, were raised on the profane shoulders of the archers, lifted into a carriage, and most appropriately turned over to the keeping of the *Filles Penitentes* at Paris.

And now was to be gratified the lofty wish of Angelique to tread in paths where, unsustained by any human sympathy, she might cast herself with an undivided reliance on the Arm which she knew could never fail her. From the solemn repose of Port-Royal, she was called, by the general of the order, to assume the government of the ladies of Maubisson. Thetis passing from the ocean caves to the Grecian camp, did not make a more abrupt transition. At Maubisson, the compromise between religious duties and earthly pleasures was placed on the most singular footing. Monks and nuns sauntered together through the gardens of the monastery, or angled in the lakes which watered them. Fêtes were celebrated in the arbours with every pledge except that of temperance. Benedictine cowls and draperies were blended in the dance with the military uniform and the stiff brocades of their secular guests; and the evening closed with cards and dice and amateur theatricals, until the curtain fell on scenes than which none could more require than friendly shelter. Toil and care might seem to have fled the place, or rather to have been reserved exclusively for the confessor. Even for him relief was provided. Considerately weighing the extent of the labours they habitually imposed on him, his fair penitents drew up for their common use certain written forms of self-arraignment, to which he, with equal tenderness, responded by other established forms of conditional absolution.

But the lady entered, and Comus and his crew fled the hallowed ground which they had thus been permitted to defile. She entered with all the majesty of faith, tempered by a meek compassion for the guilt she abhorred, and strong in that virgin purity of heart which can endure unharmed the contact even of pollution. "Our health and our lives may be sacrificed," she said to her associates in this work of mercy; "but the work is the work of God:" and in the strength of God she performed it. Seclusion from the world was again established within the refectory and the domain of Maubisson. Novices possessing a "genuine vocation" were admitted. Angelique directed at once the secular and the spiritual affairs of the convent. All the details of a feudal principality, the education of the young, the care of the sick, the soothing of the penitents, the management of the perverse, the conduct of the sacred offices, alternately engaged her time; and in each she exhibited a gentleness, a gayety, and a firmness of mind, before which all resistance gave way. The associates of Madame d'Etrees retained their love of good cheer, and Angelique caused their table to be elegantly served. They sang deplorably out of tune, and the young abbess silently endured the discord which racked her ear. To their murmurs she answered in her kindest accents. Their indolence she rebuked only by performing the most menial offices in their service; and inculcated self-denial by assigning to herself a dormitory, which, to say the truth, would have much better suited the house-dog. The record of the strange and even sordid self-humiliations to which she thought it right to bow, can hardly be read without a smile; but, whatever may have been the errors of her creed, a more touching picture has never been drawn of the triumphs of love and of wisdom, than in the record left by Madame Suireau des Anges of this passage of the life of Angelique Arnauld.

But Madame d'Etrees was not yet at the end of her resources. A company of young men, under the guidance of her brother-in-law Count de Sauzé were observed one evening to loiter near the house of the *Filles Penitentes*. By the next morning she was under their escort at the gates of Maubisson. Burst open by main force, they again admitted the ejected abbess. The servant who opposed her entrance was chastised on the spot. Patients who now occupied as an hospital the once sumptuous chambers of the abbatial lodge, instantly found themselves in much more humble lodgings. Cooks resumed their long neglected art, and Madame d'Etrees provided a dinner worthy of her former hospitality and her recent privations. But in the presence of Angelique, the virago was abashed. To intimidate or provoke her rival proved alike impossible: it might be more easy to overpower her. De Sauzé and his confederates made the attempt. They discharged their pistols and flourished their drawn swords over her head, with unmanly menaces. She remained unmoved and silent. The screams which the occasion demanded, were accordingly supplied by the intrusive abbess. Clamour and outrage were alike ineffectual. At length Madame d'Etrees and her respectable confessor, aided by De Sauzé, laid their hands on Angelique, and thrust her from the precincts of the monastery. Thirty of the nuns followed her in solemn procession. Their veils let down, their eyes cast on the earth, and their hands clasped in prayer, they slowly moved to a place of refuge in the neighbouring town of Pontoise!

But alas, for the vanity of human triumphs! —waving banners, and burnished arms glitter through the advancing column of dust on the road from Paris to Maubisson. Scouts announce the approach of two hundred and fifty well-appointed archers; Madame d'Etrees and her cavaliers escape by the postern. A desperate leap saves the worthless life of her confessor. Her partisan, the Mere de la Sure, "a nun by profession, but otherwise resembling a trooper," mounts through a trap-door to a hiding-place in the ceiling, thence to be shamefully dragged by an archer whom she still more shamefully abused. Then might be seen through the gloom of night, a train of priests and nuns drawing near with measured steps to the venerable abbey; on either side a double file of cavalry, and in each horseman's hand a torch, illuminating the path of the returning exiles. Angelique resumed her benignant reign; but not in peace. Brigands led by De Sauze, and encouraged by her rival, haunted the neighbouring forests; and though protected by the archers, the monastery remained in a state of siege. Shots were fired through the windows, and the life of Angelique was endangered. Strong in the assurance of Divine protection, she demanded and obtained the removal of the guard. Her confidence was justified by the event. Madame d'Etrees was discovered, was restored to her old quarters at the *Filles Penitentes*, and in due time transferred—not without good cause—to the chatelet; there to close in squalid misery, in quarrels, and intemperance, a career which might, with almost equal propriety, form the subject of a drama, a homily or a satire.

For five successive years Angelique laboured to bring back the ladies of Maubisson to the exact observance of their sacred vows. Aided by her sister Agnes, the abbess of St. Cyr, she established a similar reform in a large proportion of the other Cistertian nunneries of France. All obstacles yielded to their love, their prudence, and their self-devotion. A moral plague was stayed, and excesses which even the sensual and the worldly condemned, were banished from the sanctuaries of religion. That in some, the change was but from shameless riot to hypocritical conformity; that in others, intemperance merely gave way to mental lethargy; and that even the most exalted virtues of the cloister held but a subordinate and an equivocal place in the scale of Christian graces, is indeed but too true: yet assuredly, it was in no such critical spirit as this, that the labours of Angelique were judged and accepted by Him, in the lowly imitation of whom she had thus gone about doing good. "She has done what she could," was the apology with which he rescued from a like cold censure the love which had expressed itself in a costly and painful sacrifice; nor was the gracious benediction which rewarded the woman of Bethany withheld from the abbess of Port-Royal. To that tranquil home she bent her steps, there to encounter far heavier trials than any to which the resentment of Madame d'Etrees had exposed her.

Accompanied by a large number of the nuns of Maubisson, Angelique returned to the valley of Chevreuse. They brought with them neither silver nor gold, though rich in treasures of a far higher price in the account of their devout protectress. Poverty, disease, and death, were however in their train. Rising from the marshes below, a humid fog hung continually on the slopes of the adjacent hills and the now crowded monastery was soon converted into one great hospital. But for a timely transfer of the whole establishment to a hotel purchased for them by the mother of Angelique in the Faubourg St. Jaques at Paris, their remaining history might all have been compressed into a chapter on the influence of *malaria*.

The restoration of the community to health was not, however, the most momentous consequence of the change. It introduced the abbess to the society, and the influence of Hauranne de Verger, the abbot of St. Cyran, one of the most memorable names in the ecclesiastical annals of that age. When Richelieu was yet a simple bishop, he distinguished among the crowd of his companions one whose graceful bearing, open countenance, learning, gayety, and wit, revealed to his penetrating glance the germs of future eminence. But to an eye dazzled by such prospects as were already dawning on the ambitious statesman, those which had arrested the upward gaze of his young associate were altogether inscrutable. With what possible motive De Verger should for whole days bury himself in solitude, and chain down that buoyant spirit to the study of the Greek and Latin fathers was one of the few problems which ever engaged and baffled the sagacity of M. de Lucon. They parted; the prelate to his craft, the student to his books; the one to extort the reluctant admiration of the world, the other to toil and to suffer in the cause of piety and truth. They met again; the cardinal to persecute, and the abbot to be his victim. Death called them both to their account; leaving to them in the world they had agitated or improved, nothing but historical names, as forcibly contrasted as they had been strangely associated.

Great men (and to few could that title be more justly given than to Richelieu) differ from other men chiefly in the power of self-multiplication; in knowing how to make other men adopt their views and execute their purposes. Thus to subjugate the genius of St. Cyran, the great minister had spared neither caresses nor bribes. The place of first almoner to Henrietta of England, the bishoprics of Clermont and Bayonne, a choice among numerous abbacies, were successively offered and refused. "Gentlemen, I introduce to you the most learned man in Europe," was the courteous phrase by which the cardinal made known the friend of his youth to the courtiers who thronged his levée. But human applause had lost its charm for the ear of St. Cyran. The retired and studious habits of his early days had not appeared more inexplicable to the worldly-minded statesman than his present indifference. Self-knowledge had made Richelieu uncharitable. Incredulous of virtues of which he detected no type in the dark recesses of his own bosom, he saw, in his former companion, a treacherous enemy, if not a rival. There were secrets of his early life, of which he seems to have expected and feared the disclosure. St. Cyran was at least the silent, and might become the open enemy of the declaration by which the parliament and clergy of Paris had annulled the marriage of Gaston, duke of Orleans, to pave the way for his union with the niece of the cardinal. To his long-cherished scheme of erecting the kingdom of France into a patriarchate in his own favour, there could arise no more probable or more dangerous opponent. To these imaginary or anticipated wrongs, was added another, which seems to have excited still more implacable resentment. An aspirant after every form of glory, Richelieu had convinced himself, and required others to believe, that his literary and theological were on a level with his political powers. He was the author of a catechism where might be read the dogma, that contrition alone, uncombined in the heart of the penitent with any emotion of love towards the Deity, was sufficient to justify an absolution at the confessional. One Seguenot, a priest of the oratory, maintained and published the opposite opinion. Rumour denied to Seguenot the real parentage of the book which bore his name, and ascribed it to St. Cyran. From speculations on the love of God to feelings of hatred to man, what polemic will not readily pass, whether his cap be red or black? Seguenot's errors were denounced by the Sorbonne, and the poor man himself was sent to the Bastille, there, during the rest of his great opponent's life, to obtain clearer views on the subject of contrition. Impartial justice required that the real, or imputed, should fare no better than the nominal author; and St. Cyran was conducted to Vincennes, to breathe no more the free air of heaven till Richelieu himself should be laid in the grave.

Never had that gloomy fortress received within its walls a man better fitted to endure with composure the utmost reverses of fortune. To him, as their patriarch or founder, the whole body of the Port-Royalists, with one voice, attribute not merely a pre-eminence above all other teachers, but such a combination of intellectual powers and Christian graces, as would entitle him not so much to a place in the calendar, as to a place apart from, and above, the other luminaries in that spiritual galaxy. Make every deduction from their eulogies which a rational skepticism may suggest, and it will yet be impossible to evade the accumulated proofs on which they claim for St. Cyran the reverence of mankind. Towards the close of the first of the four volumes which he has dedicated to the attempt, Claude Lancelot confesses and laments the difficulty of conveying to others by words any definite image of the sublime and simple reality which he daily contemplated with more than filial reverence. He describes a man moving through the whole circle of the virtues which the gospel inculcates, with a step so firm as to indicate the constant aid of a more than human power, and with a demeanour so lowly as to bespeak an habitual consciousness of that divine presence. He depicts a moral hero, by whom every appetite had been subdued, and every passion tranquillized, though still exquisitely alive to the pains and the enjoyments of life, and responding with almost feminine tenderness to every affectionate and kindly feeling—a master of all erudition, but never so happy as when imparting to little children the elementary truths on which his own heart reposed—grave, nay, solemn in discourse, but with tones so gentle, a wisdom so profound, and words of such strange authority to animate and to soothe the listener, that, in comparison with his, all other colloquial eloquence was wearisome and vapid—rebuking vice far less by stern reproof than by the contrast of his own serene aspect, at once the result and the reflection of the perfect peace in which his mind continually dwelt,—exhibiting a transcript, however rudely and imperfectly, yet faithfully drawn, of the great example to which his eye was ever turned, and where, averting his regard from all inferior models, it was his wont to study, to imitate, and to adore. In short, the St. Cyran of Lancelot's portraiture is one of those rare mortals whose mental health is absolute and unimpaired—whose character consists not so much in the excellence of particular qualities, as in the symmetry, the balance, and the well-adjusted harmonies of all—who concentrate their energies in one mighty object, because they live under the habitual influence of one supreme motive —who are ceaselessly animated by a love embracing every rational being, from Him who is the common parent of the rest, to the meanest and the vilest of those who were originally created in his image and likeness.

Nor was Lancelot a man inapt to discriminate. He was the author of the Port-Royal Grammars, Greek, Latin, and the Italian, now fallen into disuse, but so well known to such of us as ploughed those rugged soils during the first ten years of the present century. His biographical labours are not without a tinge of his style as a grammarian;—a little tedious perhaps, and not a little prolix and over-methodical, but replete in almost every page with such touches of genuine dignity in the master, and cordial reverence in the disciple—with a sympathy so earnest for the virtues he celebrates, and so simple-hearted a consciousness of his own inferiority—that, in the picture he undesignedly draws of himself, he succeeds more than in any other way in raising a lofty conception of the man by whom he was held in such willing and grateful subjugation. And he had many fellow-subjects. Richelieu himself had felt his daring spirit awed by the union, in the friend of his youth, of a majestic repose and unwearied activity, which compelled the great minister to admit that the heart of man might envelop mysteries beyond his divination. Pascal, Nicole, Arnauld, and many others, eminent in that age for genius and piety, submitted themselves to his guidance in their studies as well as in their lives, with the implicit deference of children awaiting the commands of a revered and affectionate father. He was the most voluminous writer; but of his published works one only attained a transient celebrity, and of that book his authorship was more than doubtful. If he did not disown, he never claimed it. Of the innumerable incidents recorded of him during his imprisonment at Vincennes, few are more characteristic than the sale of a considerable part of a scanty collection of books he had brought there, to purchase clothes for two of his fellow-prisoners, the Baron and Baroness de Beau Soleil. "I entreat you," he says to the lady to whom he gave this commission, "that the cloth may be fine and good, and befitting their station in society. I do not know what is becoming; but, if I remember, some one has told me that gentlemen and ladies of their condition ought not to be seen in company without gold lace for the men and black lace for the women. If I am right about this, pray purchase the best, and let every thing be done modestly, yet handsomely, that when they see each other, they may, for a few minutes at least, forget that they are captives." It is in the moral, rather than in the intellectual qualities of St. Cyran, that his claim to the veneration of posterity must now be rested. He occupies a place in ecclesiastical history as the founder of Jansenism in France.

Of that system of religious belief and practice, the origin is to be traced to the joint labours of St. Cyran and Cornelius Jansen, during the six years which they passed in social study at Bayonne. Returning to his native country, Jansen became first a professor of divinity at Louvain, and afterwards bishop of Ypres. There he surrendered himself to a life of unremitting labour. Ten times he read over every word of the works of Augustine; thirty times he studied all those passages of them which relate to the Pelagian controversy. All the fathers of the church were elaborately collated for passages illustrative of the opinions of the bishop of Hippo. At length, after an uninterrupted study of twenty years, was finished the celebrated *Augustinus Cornelii Jansenii.* With St. Austin as his text and guide, the good bishop proceeded to establish, on the authority of that illustrious father, those doctrines which, in our times and country, have been usually distinguished by the terms Calvinistic or Evangelical. Heirs of guilt and corruption, he considered the human race, and each successive member of it, as lying in a state of condemnation, and as advancing towards a state of punishment; until an internal impulse from on high awakens one and another to a sense of this awful truth, and infuses into them a will to fly from impending vengeance. But this impulse is imparted only to the few; and on them it is bestowed in pursuance of a decree existing in the divine intelligence before the creation of our species. Of the motives of their preference not even a conjecture can be formed. So far as human knowledge extends, it is referable simply to the divine volition; and is not dependent on any inherent moral difference between the objects of it, and those from whom such mercy is withheld. This impulse is not, however, irresistible. Within the limits of his powers, original or imparted, man is a free agent;—free to admit and free to reject the proffered aid. If rejected, it enhances his responsibility—if admitted, it leads him by continual accessions of the same supernatural assistance to an acquiescence in those opinions, to the exercise of those affections, and to the practice of those virtues, which collectively form the substance of the Christian system. Such is the general result of the labours of Jansen. On the day which witnessed the completion of them, he was removed by the plague to a state of being where he probably learned at once to rejoice in the fidelity, and to smile at the simplicity of those sublunary toils. Within an hour of his death he made a will, submitting his work to the judgment of the Church of Rome, in the communion of which he had lived and was about to die. He addressed to Pope Urban the Eighth a letter, laying the fruits of his studies at the feet of his holiness, "approving, condemning, advancing, or retracting, as should be prescribed by the thunder of the apostolic see." Both the will and the letter were suppressed by his executors. Two years from the death of its author had not elapsed, before the *Augustinus* appeared in print. It was the signal of a contest which for nearly seventy years agitated the Sorbonne and Versailles, fired the enthusiasm of the ladies and the divines of France, and gave to her historians and her wits a theme, used with fatal success, to swell the tide of hatred and of ridicule—which has finally swept away the temporal greatness, and for awhile silenced the spiritual ministrations of the Gallican church.

Having aided largely in the composition of this memorable treatise, St. Cyran exerted himself with still greater effect in building up a society for the maintenance and promulgation of the principles it established. Angelique Arnauld and the sisterhood of Port-Royal were now settled at Paris, but they were still the proprietors of the deserted monastery; and there were gradually assembled a college of learned men, bound by no monastic vows, and living according to no positive rule, Benedictine or Franciscan. They were chiefly disciples of St. Cyran, and under his guidance had retired from the world to consecrate their lives to penitence, to their own spiritual improvement, and to the instruction of mankind.

Of this number was Antoine Le Maitre. At the age of twenty-seven, he had been advanced to the rank of councellor of state, and enjoyed at the bar an unrivalled reputation for learning and for eloquence. When he was to speak, even the churches were abandoned. Quitting their pulpits the preachers assisted to throng the hall of the palace of justice; and some of the most celebrated among them actually obtained from their superiors a permanent dispensation from their ecclesiastical duties at such seasons, that they might improve in the art of public speaking by listening to the great advocate. When he spoke, the delight of the audience broke out into bursts of applause, which the judges were unable or unwilling to repress. "I would rather be the object of those plaudits than enjoy all the glory of my lord the cardinal," was the somewhat hazardous exclamation of one of his friends, as he joined, heart and hand, in the universal tumult.

Far different was the estimate which his devout mother had formed of the prospects of her son. She was one of the sisters of Angelique Arnauld, and amidst the cares of conjugal life cherished a piety at least as pure and as ardent as ever burned in the bosom of a Carthusian. In the wealth and glory which rewarded his *forensic* eminence she could see only allurements, to which (so she judged) his peace on earth, and his meetness for a holier state of being beyond the grave must be sacrificed. She mourned over his fame, and prayed that her child might be abased, so in due season he might be exalted. It happened that his aunt Madame D'Andilly, in the last awful scene of life, was attended by her kindred, and amongst the rest by Le Maitre. Her fading eye was fixed on the crucifix borne in the hand of St. Cyran, as she listened to his voice, now subdued to its gentlest accents, and breathing hope, and peace, and consolation. It was as though some good angel had overpassed the confines of the earthly and heavenly worlds, to give utterance, in human language, to emotions sacred as his own high abode, and to thoughts as lofty as his own celestial nature. The great orator listened, and wondered, and wept. An eloquence such as even his fervent imagination had never before conceived, enthralled and subdued his inmost soul. It was but a soft whisper in the chamber of death; but in those gentle tones, and to that weeping company, were spoken words, compared with which his own eloquence appeared to him trivial, harsh, and dissonant as the howlings of the forest. And when his dying relative's last sigh was heard, accompanied by the solemn benediction, "Depart, O Christian soul! from this world, in the name of the Almighty God who created you," Le Maitre felt that the bonds which attached him to that world were for ever broken. He yielded himself to the spiritual guidance of St. Cyran; resigned his office and his calling; and plunged into a retreat, where in solitude, silence, and continued penances, he passed the remaining twenty-one years of his life. By the advice of his confessor, the execution of this design was postponed till the close of the annual session of the courts. In the interval he resumed his ordinary employments, but the spirit which till then had animated his efforts was gone. He became languid and unimpressive; and one of the judges was heard to mutter, that, after all, the real power of Le Maitre was that of persuading to sleep. This was too much even for a penitent. Fixing his eye on the critic, he once more summoned his dormant strength, and pouring forth all the energies of his soul in one last and most triumphant speech, he for ever quitted the scene of his forensic glories. At Port-Royal he appropriately charged himself with the care of the proprietary interests of the house. A village judge in the neighbourhood was once attended by the illustrious advocate on a question of the purchase of some bullocks. Astounded by his eloquence, (so runs the story,) the judge fell on his knees before the pleader, professing his unworthiness to preside in his presence, and imploring that they might exchange places. A more likely tale records that the booksellers had got up, during Le Maitre's retreat, an edition of his speeches full of interpolations and errors. At "the request of friends," though not with the consent of his confessors, the orator undertook a corrected edition. His spiritual guides interfered. They prescribed, as a new species of penance, that he should silently acquiesce in this inroad on his fame as a speaker. The penitent submitted, but not so the booksellers. They (worldly men!) talked loudly of violated promises, and of sheets rendered useless. He listened to discourses on the duty of mortifying these last movements of vain glory. Under the excitement of the dispute, his health, already enfeebled by his mode of life, gave way. A fever decided the question against the publishers; and Le Maitre was doomed at length to die the victim of the brilliant career he had so long and resolutely abandoned.

His brother Mons. de Sericourt was another of the converts of St. Cyran. De Sericourt had served with distinction under Condé. He was taken prisoner at the seige of Philipsberg, and effected his escape by leaping from the walls of the fortress at the imminent hazard of his life. Under the deep impression, which this incident left on his mind, of the protecting care of Providence, he returned to Paris, where his first object was to visit his brother, the report of whose retreat from the bar had filled him with astonishment. He found him (the words are Fontaine's) in a kind of a tomb, where he was buried alive; his manner bespeaking all the gloom of penitence. De Sericourt was shocked, and in vain endeavoured to recognise Le Maitre in the person who stood before him. Immediately changing his demeanour, Le Maitre embraced his brother with looks full of gayety and spirit, exclaiming, "Behold the Le Maitre of former days! He is dead to the world, and now desires only to die to himself. I have spoken enough to men. Henceforth I wish to converse only with God. I have exerted myself in vain to plead the cause of others. Now I am to plead my own. Do you intend to pay me the same compliment which I receive from the world at large, who believe and publish that I have gone mad?" Nothing could be more remote from the judgment of the soldier. Instead of regarding his brother as mad, he aspired to share his solitude, and succeeded. Under the direction of St. Cyran, he joined in the silence and austerities of the advocate. During the war of the princes he once more took up arms for the defence of Port-Royal; but his monastic life was soon brought to a close. Philipsberg had in reality been attended with less danger. At the age of thirty-nine he died, a premature victim to fastings, vigils, confinement, and probably to ennui. Recruits for Port-Royal were but seldom drawn from the armies of the most Christian king, and could hardly have been draughted from a less promising quarter.

In this memorable brotherhood there was yet a third, Louis Isaac Le Maitre de Saci. At the early age of fourteen he was placed by his aunt, the Mère Angelique, under the guidance of St. Cyran. From that prophetic eye the future eminence of his pupil was not hidden. "God will restore him to you, for his death would probably be the greatest loss which the church could sustain"—was the prediction with which St. Cyran at once disclosed his own hopes and allayed the fears of De Saci's mother, as he watched over the sick-bed of her child. To insure the fulfilment of those hopes, the mind of the boy was sedulously trained. Absolute, unhesitating submission to human authority, as representing the Divine, was the cardinal principle of his education. Though himself one of the most conspicuous teachers of his age as a guide to others, he, on no single question, presumed to guide himself. If no other director could have been had, he would have placed himself under the direction of his valet, was the praise with which his friends expressed their admiration of his illustrious docility. By the advice or commands of St. Cyran, he accordingly, like his brothers, became one of the recluses of Port-Royal; and like them, transferred to the support of the monastery all his worldly wealth. With them also he surrendered himself up to penitence, to solitude, and to silence; and in their company supplied his emaciated frame with food which rather marked than satisfied its wants. Le Maitre thus describes one of the *petits soupers* of Port-Royal:—"It is, you know, but a slight repast which they serve up for us in the evening; but it engages my brother De Saci as completely as the most sumptuous meal. For my own part, such is the warmth of my temperament, the end of my good cheer follows so hard on its beginning, that I can hardly tell which is which. When all is over with me, and I have nothing left to do but to wash my hands, I see my brother De Saci, as composed and as serious as ever, take up his quarter of an apple, peel it deliberately, cut it up with precision, and swallow it at leisure. Before he begins, I have more than half done. When his little all is over, he rises from table as light as when he sat down, leaving untouched the greater part of what was set before him, and walks off as seriously as a man who had been doing great things, and who never fasted except on fast-days." Poor Le Maitre! the gay spirit which had animated the palace of justice had its transient flashes even in his "living tomb;" though the smile was in this case lighted up at an absurdity which had well-nigh conducted his brother to that tomb where all life is extinct. Under these solemn parodies on what usually goes on at the dinner table, De Saci pined away; and was rescued, not without extreme hazard, from the effects of his suicidal abstemiousness. He returned from the gates of death with a spirit unsubdued and undaunted; for it was animated by hopes, and sustained by convictions which gave to that last enemy the aspect and the welcome of a friend. Admitted, in reluctant obedience to his confessor, to ordination as a priest, he assumed the office of director to the recluses of either sex at Port-Royal. Nature struggled in the bosom of Le Maitre against laying bare all the secrets of his soul to the inspection of the younger brother. But authority prevailed. Their mother led the way, by placing herself under the direction of her son. Blaize Pascal himself merely took the law of his conscience from the same revered lips. Days of persecution followed; and De Saci was driven from his retreat, and confined for more than two years in the Bastille. There was fulfilled the prediction of St. Cyran. Fontaine, the bosom friend of De Saci, was the associate of his prison hours. They were hours of suffering and of pain. But they had been ill-exchanged for the brightest and the most joyous passed by the revellers in the gay city beneath them. In those hours, De Saci executed, and his friend transcribed, that translation of the Holy Scriptures which to this moment is regarded in France as the most perfect version in their own or in any other modern tongue. While yet under the charge of St. Cyran, the study of the divine oracles was the ceaseless task of De Saci. In mature life, it had been his continual delight; in the absence of every other solace, it possessed his mind with all the energy of a master passion. Of the ten thousand chords which there blend together in sacred harmony, there was not one which did not awaken a responsive note in the heart of the aged prisoner. In a critical knowledge of the sacred text he may have had many superiors, but none in that exquisite sensibility to the grandeur, the pathos, the superhuman wisdom, and the awful purity of the divine original, without which none can truly apprehend, or accurately render into another idiom, the sense of the inspired writers. Even the habitual prostration of his judgment to a human authority, believed to be divine, aided him as a translator. It forbade, indeed, the correction of errors, but it imparted freedom and confidence to the expression of all that he acknowledged as truth. Protestants may with justice except to many a passage of De Saci's translation; but they will, we fear, search their own libraries in vain for any, where the author's unhesitating assurance of the real sense of controverted words permits his style to flow with a similar absence of constraint, and an equal warmth and glow of diction.

Fontaine, the humble companion of his biblical labours, had also been one of the penitents of De Saci. He was a man of learning, and his "Mémoires sur M.M. de Port-Royal," bespeak a nature gentle, affectionate, and devout. But to saturate his memory with the discourse of minds more exalted than his own, and to minister to them in collating or transcribing the books on which they were employed, limited his humble desires. He was successively the amanuensis of De Saci, and the secretary of the "great Arnauld." With the exception of Pascal, a name so great does not appear among the disciples of St. Cyran, or the inmates of Port-Royal.

Antoine Arnauld was the youngest child of the parents of the Mère Angelique: he was consequently the uncle of Le Maitre, De Sericourt, and De Saci. From his earliest years the reputation of his genius and learning had rendered him the object of universal notice and expectation. Richelieu himself is recorded to have stolen silently into his chamber, to enjoy the unpremeditated conversation of the young student. The cardinal had no apparent reason to dread that in this case his advances would be repulsed; for Arnauld possessed several rich benefices, dressed in the fashion, and even kept a carriage. But repulsed they were, and by the influence of the man to whom similar allurements had been presented in vain. In his dungeon at Vincennes, St. Cyran received a visit from the young abbé. That almost magical influence was again exerted with irresistible power. Arnauld renounced his preferments, assumed the garb of penitence, and became the companion of his nephews, Le Maitre and Sericourt, in their austere retirement. This abandonment of the world was not, however, so absolute, but that he still sought the rank of a *socius*, or fellow of the Sorbonne. By the authority of Richelieu, his claims were rejected. But not even the cardinal could obstruct the advancement of so eminent a scholar and divine to the dignity of a doctor in divinity. "To defend the truth, if necessary, to the death," was in those days one of the vows of such a graduate—vows, it is to be feared, light as air with most men, but, in this instance, engraven as with a pen of iron on the soul of the new professor of theology. A year had scarcely elapsed since he had received from the lips of his dying mother an adjuration to be faithful in the defence of truth at the expense, were it possible, of a thousand lives. Touched with the coincidence of his academical oath and of this maternal precept, he thenceforward existed but to combat for what he at least esteemed the truth; and endured poverty, exile, and reproach, as he would have cheerfully submitted to death, in that sacred warfare. In controversy he found his vocation, his triumph, and perhaps his delight. The author of more than a hundred volumes, he was engaged in almost as many contests. His great work, *La frequente Communion*, is essentially controversial. He warred with the Jesuits as a body; and with several of their most eminent writers, as Sirmond, Nouet, and De Bonis, he carried on separate debates. Apologies for St. Cyran, Jansenius, and for the ladies of Port-Royal, flowed copiously from his ever ready pen. He assailed the metaphysical meditations of Des Cartes, and Malebranche's theory of miracles. Even with his friend and associate, Nicole, he contended, on an attempt to apply certain geometrical principles to the solution of some problems in divinity. Claude, Maimbourg, and Annat, were among his adversaries. The mere list of his works occupies twenty-six closely printed octavo pages. A rapid analysis of them fills a large volume. If that compilation may be trusted, (he would be a bold man who should undertake to verify it) the vast collection of books which bear the name of Antoine Arnauld scarcely contain a tract, except those on mathematics, in which he is not engaged in theological or scientific strife with some antagonist. In the catalogue, of course, appears the celebrated treatise *De la Perpetuite de la Foi sur l'Eucharistie*, a work rewarded with higher applause than any other of his avowed writings. Twenty-seven bishops and twenty doctors prefaced it with eulogies on the learning, piety, talents, and orthodoxy of the illustrious author. He dedicated it to Clement IX., and was repaid with the most glowing compliments. Perhaps a still more gratifying tribute to his success was the conversion to the Roman Catholic faith of Turenne, of which this book was the occasion; and yet nothing is more certain than that the real author was not Arnauld, but Nicole. In the title-page of a book, designed to refute the formidable Claude, the two friends judged the name of a doctor of the church would avail more than that of a simple *tonsure*—a literary and pious fraud, which it is impossible to excuse; and, on the side of Nicole, an example of zeal for a man's cause triumphing over his love of fame, to which it would not be easy to find a parellel. Such, however, was the height of Arnauld's reputation, and such the affluence of his mind, that it is scarcely reasonable to attribute this disengenuous proceeding to selfish motives. Few men have been more enamoured of the employments, or less covetous of the rewards, of a literary life. For nearly threescore years he lived pen in hand, except when engaged in devotion, or in celebrating the offices of the church of Port-Royal on occasions of peculiar dignity. His was one of those rare natures to which intellectual exertion brings relief rather than lassitude; thus giving to feebler understanding the assurance, that the living spirit which is in man, if disunited from the burdens of mortality, would be capable of efforts commensurate with an immortal existence.

His book, *de la frequente Communion*, was the commencement of the seventy years' religious war which ended in the destruction of Port-Royal. To restore the severe maxims of Christian antiquity respecting the spiritual qualification of communicants, and thus to raise a standard of church membership incomparably more exalted than that which prevailed in his own generation, was the avowed object of Arnauld. His scarcely concealed purpose was to chastise the lax morality to which the Jesuits had lent their sanction; and to repel their attacks on the more rigid system of St. Cyran. Revised in his prison by that father of the faithful, and sheltered by the commendation of divines of every rank and order, the book—forbearing in style, lofty in sentiment, replete with various learning, and breathing an eloquence at once animated by unhesitating faith, and chastened by the most profound humility—broke like a peal of thunder over the heads of his startled antagonists. Such was the fury of their resentment, that the Marshal de Vihé sagaciously observed, "There must be some secret in all this. The Jesuits are never so excited when nothing but the glory of God is at stake." Though at first struck down by the censures of a conclave of bishops, with Mazarin at their head, Nouet, the great advocate of the society, returned again and again to the assault. Pulpits fulminated, presses groaned. On the one side the Sorbonne invoked the aid of the civil power, then in feeble hands; on the other, the Jesuits appealed to the papal see, then rising in new vigour from the disasters of the preceding century. Arnauld was cited by the pope, and required by the cardinal minister of France to appear in his own defence at Rome. Against this infringement of the Gallican liberties, the university, the Sorbonne, and the Parliament of Paris remonstrated, but Mazarin was inflexible.

The holy see took cognisance of the cause, though the person of the accused was beyond their reach. In his absence, that infallible tribunal decided not to let the world know whether, of the thirty erroneous opinions imputed to Arnauld, twenty and nine were heretical or not. Arnauld himself, however, was unable to stand his ground. For twenty-five years together, he was compelled to live in a voluntary concealment; which his enemies had not the power, nor perhaps the wish, to violate. His retirement was passed in the monastery of Port-Royal, or in one of the adjacent hermitages.

That ancient seat of their order had now been long deserted by his sister Angelique and her associates. Their residence at Paris had not been unfruitful of events. They had exchanged the jurisdiction of the general of their order for that of the archbishop of Paris. On the resignation of Angelique, the abbatial dignity had been made elective in their house. An ineffectual scheme of devoting themselves to the perpetual adoration of the holy eucharist, had deeply exercised their thoughts. Occasional miracles had awakened or rewarded their piety. An inspired litany (so it is believed) had fallen insensibly from the pen of sister Agnes, which eight doctors censured, St. Cyran vindicated, and the pope suppressed. From his prison at Vincennes, their great apologist directed their consciences, and guided them to the office of educating children of their own sex—a wise and happy project, which brought back into the sphere of ordinary duties, minds soaring with indefinite aims into the regions of mysticism, and wasting, in efforts for an ideal perfection, talents eminently fitted to bless and to improve mankind. To restore the sisterhood to the quiet valley where their predecessors had worshipped, was the next care of St. Cyran. True, it threatened their lives; but "is it not," he asked, "as well to serve God in a hospital as in a church, if such be his pleasure?" "Are any prayers more acceptable than those of the afflicted?" Angelique's heart had a ready answer to such questions from such an inquirer. In that sequestered church where angels, and a still more awful presence, had once dwelt, they could not but still abide, (such was his assurance,) and she returned to seek them there. She came, attended by a large proportion of the ladies of Port-Royal, hailed by the poor and aged, whom in former times she had cherished, and welcomed by her kinsmen and the companions of their religious solitude. It was their first and only meeting. Les Granges (a farmhouse on the hill-side) became the residence of the recluses, the gates of the monastery closing on the nuns. Bound by no monastic vows, the men addressed themselves to such employments as each was supposed best qualified to fill. Schools for the instruction of youth in every branch of literature and science were kept by Lancelot, Nicole, Fontaine, and De Saci. Some laboured at translations of the fathers, and other works of piety. Arnauld applied his ceaseless toils in logic, geometry, metaphysics, and theological debate. Physicians of high celebrity exercised their art in all the neighbouring villages.

Le Maitre and other eminent lawyers addressed themselves to the work of arbitrating in all the dissensions of the vicinage. There were to be seen gentlemen working assiduously as vine-dressers; officers making shoes; noblemen sawing timber and repairing windows; a society held together by no vows; governed by no corporate laws; subject to no common superior; pursuing no joint designs, yet all living in unbroken harmony; all following their respective callings; silent, grave, abstracted, self-afflicted by fastings, watchings, and humiliations—a body of penitents on their painful progress through a world which they had resolved at once to serve and to avoid. From year to year, till death or persecution removed them from the valley of Port-Royal, the members of this singular association adhered pertinaciously to their design; nor among their annals will be found more, we think, than a single name on which rests the imputation of infidelity, or fickleness of purpose. To the nuns, indeed, no such change was possible. Like the inhabitants of Les Granges, they employed themselves in educating the children of the rich and the poor, in almsgiving, and in other works of mercy. Their renunciation of secular cares was combined (no common alliance) with an entire superiority to all secular interests. Angelique, now the elected abbess, and in that character the ruler of the temporalities of the convent, exhibited a princely spirit of munificence—nourished and sustained by the most severe and self-denying economy. She and her sisterhood reserved for themselves little more than a place in their own list of paupers. So firm was her reliance on the Divine bounty, and so abstemious her use of it, that she hazarded a long course of heroic improvidence, justified by the event and ennobled by the motive, but at once fitted and designated rather to excite the enthusiasm of ordinary mortals, than to afford a model for their imitation. Buildings were erected both at Port-Royal de Paris and Port-Royal des Champs; in the serene majesty of which the worshipper might discern an appropriate vestibule to the temple made without hands, towards which his adoration was directed. Wealth was never permitted to introduce, nor poverty to exclude any candidate for admission as a novice or a pupil. On one occasion twenty thousand francs were given as a relief to a distressed community; on another, four times that sum were restored to a benefactress, whose heart repented a bounty which she had no longer the right to reclaim. Their regular expenditure exceeded by more than seven-fold their certain income; nor were they ever disappointed in their assurance, that the annual deficiency of more than forty thousand francs would be supplied by the benevolence of their fellow Christians. What was the constraining force of charity, Angelique had learned from the study of her own heart, and she relied with a well-founded confidence on the same generous impulse in the hearts of others. The grace, the gayety, and tenderness of her nature, which might have embellished courts and palaces, were drawn into continual exercise to mitigate the anguish of disease, to soothe the wretched, and to instruct the young. Her hands ministered day and night to the relief of those whose maladies were loathsome or contagious, and her voice allayed their terrors. With playful ingenuity she would teach her associates how to employ the vestments, the furniture, and, when other resources failed, even the sacred plate of the monastery, in clothing the naked, though it left themselves in want, and in feeding the hungry, though it deprived themselves of all present resources. While distributing not merely to the necessities of the indigent, but to the relief of persons of her own rank in life, there was in the bosom of Angelique a feeling which revolted not against dependence on alms, for her vows of poverty required it, but against soliciting aid even from her nearest kindred;—a feeling condemned as human, perhaps, in her stern self-judgment, but assuredly one of those emotions which the best of our race are the last to relinquish. And if it be true, as true it surely is, that to the culture and exercise of the benevolent affections, as an ultimate end all other ends of human life—knowledge, practical skill, meditative power, self-control, and the rest—are but subservient means, who shall deny to such a course of life as that of the nuns of Port-Royal, the praise of wisdom, however ill he may judge of the wisdom which established and maintained conventical institutions? Some affections, indeed, they could not cultivate. Two of the deepest and the richest mines of their nature, maternal and conjugal love, lay unwrought and unexplored. Yet they lived, as wisdom we are told ought to live, with children round their knees; training them for every office in life, if not with a mother's yearnings, with perhaps something more than a mother's prudence. Over this singular theocracy, male and female, presided St. Cyran, exercising from his dungeon a supreme authority; and under him ruled Antoine Singlin, the general confessor both of the recluses and the nuns. In the conduct of souls, (such is the appropriate style,) Singlin was supposed to excel all the professors of that most critical science. Pascal, De Saci, and Arnauld sat at his feet with child-like docility. Ministers of state, advocates, and bishops, crowded reverently round his pulpit; yet by the confession, or rather the boast of his disciples, he was distinguished neither by learning, talents nor eloquence. The mystery of his absolute dominion over intellects so incomparably superior to his own, is partly, at least, dispelled by what remains of his writings. They indicate a mind at once discriminating and devout, conversant alike with human nature and with the Divine, exerting all its powers to penetrate the labyrinth of man's heart, and recruiting these powers by habitual communion with the source of wisdom.

Guided by such pastors, the Port-Royalists were following out a progress more tranquil than that of John Bunyan's Pilgrim, when the wars of Fronde rudely scattered the shepherd and the flock. Most of the nuns fled for refuge to Paris, but the recluses (they were Frenchmen still) appeared three hundred strong, in defence of their sequestered valley. Above their hair-shirts glittered coats of mail. As the last notes of the anthem died away, the trumpet summoned the worshippers to military exercises. Spears and helmets flashed through the woods—plumes waved over many a furrowed brow—intrenchments, which may still be traced, where thrown up; and the evening-gun, the watchword, and the heavy tread of cavalry, broke a silence till then undisturbed, except by the monastic choir, or the half-uttered prayer of some lonely penitent. De Sericourt felt once again his pulse beat high as he drew out the martial column, and raised the long forgotten words of peremptory command. But ere long a voice more subdued, though not less peremptory, was heard to silence his. De Saci's heart mourned over this reliance on an arm of flesh. Watching the first pause in the new enthusiasm of his associates, he implored them to lay aside their weapons; and in long-suffering to submit themselves and their course to the Supreme Disposer of events. At an instant the whole aspect of Port-Royal was changed. Students returned to their books, penitents to their cells, and handicraftsmen to their ordinary labours. It was a change as sudden and as complete as when, at the bidding of the Genius, the crowded bridge and the rushing river disappeared from the eyes of Mirza, leaving before him nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing on the sides of it.

To one inmate of Port-Royal the terrors of an impending war had brought no disquietude. Angelique remained there, the guardian angel of the place. Hundreds of ruined peasants were daily fed by her bounty. "Perhaps I shall not be able" (the quotation is from one of her letters written at the time) "to send you a letter to-morrow, for all our horses and asses are dead with hunger. Oh! how little do princes know the detailed horrors of war. All the provender of the beasts we have been obliged to divide between ourselves and the starving poor. We have concealed as many of the peasants and of their cattle as we could, in our monastery, to save them from being murdered and losing all their substance. Our dormitory and the chapter-house are full of horses;—we are almost stifled by being pent up with these beasts, but we could not resist the piercing lamentations of the starving and the heart-broken poor. In the cellar we have concealed forty cows. Our court-yards and out-houses are stuffed full of fowls, turkeys, ducks, geese, and asses. The church is piled up to the ceiling with corn, oats, beans, and peas, and with caldrons, kettles, and other things belonging to the cottagers. Our laundry is filled by the aged, the blind, the maimed, the halt, and infants. The infirmary is full of sick and wounded. We have torn up all our rags and linen clothing to dress their sores; we have no more, and are now at our wits' end. We dare not go into the fields for any more, as they are full of marauding parties. We hear that the abbey of St. Cyran has been burned and pillaged. Our own is threatened with an attack every day. The cold weather alone preserves us from pestilence. We are so closely crowded, that deaths happen continually. God, however, is with us, and we are at peace."

That inward peace which Angelique was thus enabled to maintain during the horrors of civil war, was soon to be exposed to a more arduous trial. To the baffled antagonists of Arnauld, Port-Royal was an abomination. There dwelt in safety their intended victim, plying his dreaded pen, surrounded by his kindred, his scholars, and his allies; and all engaged in the same contest with the casuistry, the theology, and the morals of the society of Jesus. Against those devoted enemies one Brisacier, a Jesuit, led the assault. His articles of impeachment bore that they despised the Eucharist, that they had neither holy water nor images in their churches, and that they prayed neither to the Virgin nor the Saints. Vain the clearest refutation of calumnies so shocking to the Catholic ears, and vain the archiepiscopal thunders which rebuked the slanderer. Father Meignier, of the same holy company, denounced to the astonished world a secret conspiracy against the religion of Christ, the leaders of which were the abbot of St. Cyran and Antoine Arnauld—the Voltaire and the Diderot of their age. But human credulity has its limits, and Meignier had overstepped them. For a moment the assailants paused; but at last, the womb of time, fertile in prodigies, gave birth to the far-famed "five propositions" of Father Coruet—a palpable obscure, lying in the dim regions of psychological divinity, and doomed for successive generations to perplex, to exasperate, and to overwhelm with persecution, or with ridicule, no inconsiderable part of the Christian world. That these five dogmas on the mystery of the divine grace, were to be found within the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, was not the original charge. They were at first denounced by Coruet as opinions drawn from the work of the bishop of Ypres, by Arnauld and other doctors of the Gallican church, and by them inculcated on their own disciples. Innocent the Tenth condemned the propositions as heretical; and to the authority of the Holy See, Arnauld and his friends implicitly bowed. In a wood-cut prefixed to this papal constitution by the triumphant Jesuits, Jansenius appeared in his episcopal dress, but accoutred with the aspect, the wings, and the other well-known appendages of an evil spirit, around whom were playing the lightnings of the Vatican.

The man and the heresy thus happily disposed of, a single question remained—Were the peccant propositions to be found in the *Augustinus?* Arnauld declared that he had studied the book from end to end, and could not find them there. That there they were nevertheless to be found, the Jesuits as strongly asserted. To have quoted by chapter and page the offensive passages, would have spoiled the most promising quarrel which had arisen in the church since the close of the Tridentine Council. Still-born must then have perished the ever-memorable distinction of the *droit* and the *fait*—the *droit* being the justice of the papal censure, which all Catholics admitted—the *fait* being the existence, in the *Augustinus*, of the censured propositions, which all Jansenists denied. The vulgar mode of trial by quotation, being discarded, nothing remained but trial by authority. Annat, the king's confessor, a Jesuit in religion, and Mazarin, the king's minister, a Jesuit in politics, each, from different motives, found his account in humiliating the Port-Royalists. Selected by them, a conclave of Parisian doctors decreed that the five propositions were in the book, and should be in the book. A papal bull affirmed their sentence, and then a second conclave required all the ecclesiastics, and all the religious communities of France, to subscribe their assent to the order which had thus affiliated these bastard opinions on poor Jansenius. That such a defender of the faith as Antoine Arnauld should receive their mandate in silence, the authors of it neither wished nor expected. In words exactly transcribed, though not avowedly quoted, from Chrysostome and Augustine, he drew up his own creed on the questions of grace and free-will; and in good round terms acquitted the Bishop of Ypres of having written more or less. A third conclave censured the apologist, unconscious apparently that their fulminations would reach the holy fathers of Constantinople and Hippo. They at least reached the object at which they in reality aimed. "Could the most Christian king permit that penitent recluses and young children should any longer assemble for instruction, under the influence of a man convicted of heresy on the subject of efficacious grace, and unable or unwilling to find in the *Augustinus* what the pope himself had said might be found there?" Anne of Austria listened, Mazarin whispered, and she obeyed. Armed with her authority, her lieutenants appeared at Port-Royal to restore Les Granges and the forests around it to their ancient solitude; and then had for ever fallen the glories of that sacred valley, but for an incident so strange and opportune, as to force back the memory to the precipitate descent from Mount Ida of the Homeric deities, to rescue, in the agony of his fate, some panting hero on the field of Troy.

Mademoiselle Perrier was the niece of Blaize Pascal. She was a child in her eleventh year, and a scholar residing in the monastery of Port-Royal. For three years and a half she had been afflicted with a *fistula lacrymalis*. The adjacent bones had become carious, and the most loathsome ulcers disfigured her countenance. All remedies had been tried in vain; the medical faculty had exhausted their resources. One desperate experiment remained —it was the actual cautery. For this the day was appointed, and her father had set out on a journey to be present at the operation. Now it came to pass that M. de la Potherie, who was at once a Parisian ecclesiastic, a great-uncle of Angelique and of Arnauld, and an assiduous collector of relics, had possessed himself of one of the thorns composing the crown of which we read in the Evangelists. Great had been the curiosity of the various convents to see it, and the ladies of Port-Royal had earnestly solicited that privilege. Accordingly, on the 24th of March, in the year 1656, the day of the week being Friday, and the week the third in Lent, a solemn procession of nuns, novices, and scholars, moved along the choir of the monastic church, chanting appropriate hymns, and each one, in her turn, kissing the holy relic. When the turn of Mademoiselle Perrier arrived, she, by the advice of the schoolmistress, touched her diseased eye with the thorn, not doubting that it would effect a cure. She regained her room, and the malady was gone! The cure was instantaneous and complete. So strict, however, was the silence of the abbey, especially in Lent, that except to the companion who shared her chamber, Mademoiselle Perrier did not at first divulge the miracle. On the following day the surgeon appeared with his instruments. The afflicted father was present; exhortations to patience were delivered; and every preparation was complete, when the astonished operator for the first time perceived that every symptom of the disease had disappeared. All Paris rang with the story. It reached the ear of the queen-mother. By her command, Mr. Felix, the principal surgeon to the king, investigated and confirmed the narrative. The royal conscience was touched. Who but must be moved with such an attestation from on high, of the innocence of a monastery divinely selected as the theatre of so great a miracle? Anne of Austria recalled her lieutenant. Again the recluses returned to their hermitages; the busy hum of schoolboys was heard once more at Port-Royal; and in his ancient retreat Arnauld was permitted to resume his unremitting labours.

Time must be at some discount with any man who should employ it in adjusting the "balance of improbabilities" in such a case as this. But there is one indisputable marvel connected with it. The greatest genius, the most profound scholar, and the most eminent advocate of that age, all possessing the most ample means of knowledge, all carefully investigated, all admitted, and all defended with their pens, the miracle of the holy thorn. Europe at that time produced no three men more profoundly conversant with the laws of the material world, with the laws of the human mind, and with the municipal law, than Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre: and they were all sincere and earnest believers. Yet our protestant incredulity utterly rejects both the tale itself and the inferences drawn from it, and but for such mighty names, might yield to the temptation of regarding it as too contemptible for serious notice. Why is this?—a question which volumes might be well employed to answer. In this place, a passing notice is all that can be given to it.

Antecedently to their investigation of the evidence, Pascal, Arnauld and Le Maitre, may be supposed to have reduced their reasonings on the subject to the following syllogism:—The true Church is distinguished from all others by the perennial possession of miraculous gifts: But the Church of Rome is the true church. Therefore, when a miracle is alleged to have happened to her fold, the presumption is not against, but in favour of the truth of the statement; and therefore, aided by that presumption, credit is due in such a case to testimony which would be insufficient to substantiate the fact under any other circumstance. *Negamus majorem.* It is not in the spirit of paradox, far less in that of irreverence or levity, that we would maintain the reverse—namely, that a church, really distinguished by the permanent exercise of miraculous powers, would presumably be *not* a true church, but a false.

Probability is the expectation of the recurrence of usual sequences. Certainty is the expectation of the recurrence of sequences believed to be invariable. The disappointment of such an expectation may be the disclosure of some uniform sequence hitherto unknown: that is, of one of the laws of nature, or it may be a miracle—that is, the disturbance of those laws by some power capable of controlling them. He who alleges a miracle, alleges the existence of natural laws; for there can be no exception where there is no rule. Now, to ascribe the laws of nature to any power but that of God, is atheism. To ascribe an *habitual* infringement of these laws to powers at once subordinate and opposed to the divine, is consistent alike with piety and with reason. The analogies of natural and revealed religion not only permit, but require, us thus to judge. For example; the moral law of God is love. That law is habitually infringed by human selfishness. Submission to the legitimate exercise of legitimate authority, is a law from heaven. That law is habitually infringed by human self-will. That within the range of his powers of action, man should be a free agent, is the divine law. That law, as we learn from the gospels, was habitually infringed in the case of demoniacs. That the blood of the dead should corrupt and not liquefy; that houses should be built and not fly: that diseases should be cured by therapeutics, or not at all, are all physical laws of nature—that is, of God. Those physical laws, we are told, are habitually infringed within the fold of the Roman Catholic Church. Be it so. But if so, what is the inference? That the Roman Catholic Church is the depositary of divine truth, and the special object of divine favour?—We wot not. Where such truth resides, and such favour rests, there will be a harmony, not elsewhere to be found, with the general laws of the divine economy, and the general principles of the divine government. The law is higher than the anomaly. The rule is more worthy than the exception. That conformity to the eternal ordinances of heaven, whether psychological or physical, should indicate the possession of truth and holiness in a church, is intelligible. That a systematic counteraction of any such ordinances should indicate the same, is not intelligible. If in any society any law of the divine government is habitually reversed, the inference would seem to be, that such a society is subject to the control of some power opposed to the divine. Will it be answered that every disturbance of the laws of God must proceed from the Author of those laws, and attest his agency and approbation? Why so? His moral laws are violated every instant by rebel man, why not his physical laws by rebel angels? Moses and Paul, and that divine teacher to whom Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maitre, bowed their hearts and desired to bow their understandings, all assure us that this is no impossible supposition. Or will it be answered that such reasonings impugn the miracles of Christ himself? If so, we at least abandon them as fallacious; for, sooner should our right hand forget its cunning, than be employed to write one word having that tendency. But the cases are utterly dissimilar. Assume the reality both of the series of miracles recorded in the gospels, and of the perennial series of miracles recorded in the Roman Catholic legends, and it is perfectly consistent to discern in the one the seal of truth, and in the other the impress of error. Our Redeemer's miracles blend in perfect harmony, though not in absolute unison, with those laws, physical and moral, which he established in the creation, and fulfilled in the redemption of the world. In their occasion—in their object—in their fulfilment of prophecy—in their attendant doctrine—and in their exceptional character, they are essentially distinguished from the perennial miracles of Rome. These are in absolute discord with the laws which the miracles of Christ fulfil. If compelled to believe them true, we should not be compelled to refer them to a divine original. But that the truth of such stories as that of the holy thorn should ever have commanded the assent of such men as Pascal, Arnauld and Le Maitre, is, after all, a standing wonder, and can be accounted for only by remembering that they assumed as inevitable, and hailed as invaluable, an inference which, as it seems to us, is not to be drawn from the premises, even if established.

Judge as we may of the miraculous attestation to the innocence of Port-Royal, which commanded the assent of Pascal, sentence is irreversibly passed by mankind on the prodigies wrought, at the same time and in the same cause, by the pen of that wonder-working controversialist. In the whole compass of literature, ancient and modern, there is probably nothing in the same style which could bear a comparison with the "Provincial Letters." Their peculiar excellence can be illustrated only by the force of contrast; and, in that sense, the "Letters of Junius" may afford the illustration. To either series of anonymous satires must be ascribed the praise of exquisite address, and of irresistible vigour. Each attained an immediate and lasting popularity; and each has exercised a powerful influence on the literature of succeeding times. But here all resemblance ends. No writer ever earned so much fame as Junius, with so little claim to the respect or gratitude of his readers. He embraced no large principles; he awakened no generous feelings; he scarcely advocated any great social interest. He gives equally little proof of the love of man, and of the love of books. He contributed nothing to the increase of knowledge, and but seldom ministered to blameless delight. His topics and his thoughts were all of the passing day. His invective is merciless and extravagant; and the veil of public spirit is barely thrown over his personal antipathies and inordinate self-esteem. No man was ever so greatly indebted to mere style; yet, with all its recommendations, his is a style eminently vicious. It is laboured, pompous, antithetical—never self-forgetful, never flowing freely, never in repose. The admiration he extorts is yielded grudgingly; nor is there any book so universally read which might become extinct with so little loss to the world as "The Letters of Junius." Reverse all this, and you have the characteristics of the "Provincial Letters." Their language is but the transparent, elastic, unobtrusive medium of thought. It moves with such quiet gracefulness as entirely to escape attention, until the matchless perspicacity of discussions, so incomprehensible under any management but his, forces on the mind an inquiry into the causes of so welcome a phenomenon. Pascal's wit, even when most formidable, is so tempered by kindness, as to show that the infliction of pain, however salutary, was a reluctant tribute to his supreme love of truth. His playfulness is like the laugh of childhood—the buoyancy of a heart which has no burden to throw off, and is gay without an effort. His indignation is never morose, vindictive, or supercilious: it is but philanthropy kindling into righteous anger and generous resentment, and imparting to them a tone of awful majesty. The unostentatious master of all learning, he finds recreation in toils which would paralyze an ordinary understanding; yet so sublimated is that learning with the spirit of philosophy, as to make him heedless of whatever is trivial, transient, and minute, except as it suggests or leads to what is comprehensive and eternal. But the canons of mere literary criticism were never designed to measure that which constitutes the peculiar greatness of the author of the "Provincial Letters." His own claim was to be tried by his peers—by those, who in common with him, possess a mental vision purified by contemplating that light in which is no darkness at all, and affections enlarged by a benevolence which, having its springs in heaven, has no limits to its diffusion on earth. Among his ascetic brethren in the valley of Port-Royal, he himself recognised the meet, if not the impartial judges of his labours. They hailed with transport an ally, who, to their own sanctity of manners, and to more than their own genius, added popular arts to which they could make no pretension. Perhaps they were taught by the excellent M. Singlin to regard and censure such exultation as merely human. That great spiritual anatomist probably rebuked and punished the glee which could not but agitate the innermost folds of Arnauld's heart, as he read his apologist's exquisite analysis of the *Pouvoir Prochain*, and of the *Graces Suffisantes qui ne sont pas efficaces.* For history records the misgivings of Mademoiselle Pascal, how far M. Singlin would put up with the indomitable gayety which would still chequer with some gleams of mirth her brother's cell at Les Granges, even after his preternatural ingenuity had been exhausted in rendering it the most desolate and cheerless of human abodes.

Whatever may have been his treatment of his illustrious penitents, the good man was not long permitted to guide them through their weary pilgrimage. The respite obtained for Port-Royal by the holy thorn and the "Provincial Letters," expired with the death of Mazarin and with the authority of the queen-mother. Louis began, as he believed, to act for himself—a vain attempt for a man who could never think for himself. The genius, such as it was, of the dead minister, had still the mastery over the inferior mind of the surviving monarch. Louis had been taught by the cardinal to fear and to hate De Retz, Jansenism, and Port-Royal. Poor Singlin was therefore driven away, and in due time consigned to the Bastille. At the bidding of the king, a synod of the clergy of France drew up an anti-Jansenist test, to be taken by all ecclesiastics, and by all religious communities, male and female; fortified, of course, by effective penalties. They were all required to subscribe their names to a declaration that the "five propositions," in their heretical sense, were to be found in the *Augustinus*, with no exception in favour of those who had never seen the book, or of those who could not read Latin. Nor was this an ineffectual menace. Blow after blow fell on those who refused, and even on those who were expected to refuse, thus to condemn the bishop of Ypres. Port-Royal was formost among such obdurate recusants. Their schools, male and female, were dispersed. Arnauld and the other recluses were banished from the valley. The admission of novices and postulantes was interdicted to the abbess; and her ancient monastery was threatened with suppression as contumacious and heretical.

Angelique Arnauld was now sinking under the pressure of infirmity and of old age. Half a century had elapsed since the commencement of her reforms, and her tale of threescore years and ten had been fully told; but ere she yielded her soul to him who gave it, she rose from her dying bed to make one more effort for the preservation of the house, so long devoted, under her guidance, to works of mercy and to exercises of penitence and prayer. Surrounded by a throng of weeping children, and by her eldest associates maintaining their wonted composure, she, for the last time, quitted Port-Royal des Champs, giving and receiving benedictions, and went to die at the convent of Port-Royal de Paris. She found the gates guarded, and the court-yards filled by a troop of archers, the executioners of the royal mandate for expelling the scholars, novices, postulantes, and other unprofessed inmates of the house. During eight successive days, one after another of these helpless women was torn from the place around which their affections had twined; and from the arms of the dying mother, whom they loved with the tenderness of children, and regarded with more than filial reverence. Seventy-five persons were thus successively separated from her, as from hour to hour she descended to the tomb, under bodily and mental sufferings described with fearful minuteness in the obituaries of Port-Royal. "At length our good Lord has seen fit to deprive us of all. Fathers, sisters, disciples, children—all are gone. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Such was her announcement to Madame de Sevigné of the emptying of the first vial of kingly wrath. To the queen-mother she addressed herself in a loftier, though not in a less gentle tone. At each momentary remission of her agonies, she dictated to Anne of Austria a letter, long and justly celebrated as a model of epistolary eloquence. It has no trace of debility, still less of resentment. Her defence is as clear and as collected, as though, in the fulness of health, she had been conducting the cause of another. Without a reproach or a murmur, she exposes the wrongs of her sisterhood, and the error of her persecutors. For herself she asks no sympathy; but, from the verge of the world she had so long renounced, and was now about to quit for ever, she invokes from the depositaries of worldly power, the justice they owed to man, and the submission due to the ordinances of heaven. "Now, my earthly business is done!" was her grateful exclamation as this letter was closed; and then commenced a mental and bodily strife, recorded, perhaps, but too faithfully by her biographers. These pages, at least, are no fit place for the delineation of a scene over which the sternest spectator must have wept, and the most hardened must have prayed fervently for the sufferer and for himself. From the dark close of a life so holy and so blameless, and from the hope, and peace, and joy, which at length cast over her departing spirit some radiance from that better state on the confines of which she stood, lessons may be drawn which we have no commission to teach, and which are perhaps best learned without the intervention of any human teacher. Yet, even in Port-Royal itself, there were not wanting some to whom this admonition of the vanity of human things was addressed in vain.

Among that venerable society, the Sœur Flavie Passart was unrivalled in the severity of her self-discipline, and the splendour of her superhuman gifts. As often as illness confined her to her bed, so often did a miracle restore her. The dead returned to her with messages from the other world. No saint in the calendar withheld his powerful influence in the court of heaven when she invoked it. Like many wiser folks, Sœur Flavie discovered at last, and doubtless to her own surprise, that she had become (there are none but masculine terms to express it) a liar and a knave. The same discovery was opportunely made by her associates, and arrested her progress to the elective dignities of the abbey. A penitent confession of her Jansenist errors, a denunciation of the more eminent ladies of Port-Royal as her seducers, and a retractation of her heretical belief in the innocence of Jansenius, might, however, still pave her way to the abbatial throne. So judged the Sœur Flavie, and so decided M. Perifixe, the then archbishop of Paris. She merely asked the imprisonment of twenty-six of her rivals. He cheerfully accorded so reasonable a boon. Repairing in pontifical state to the Parisian monastery, he again tendered the anti-Jansenist test. Angelique was gone; but her spirit and her constancy survived. The simple-hearted nuns thought that it would be a mere falsehood to attest the existence of "five propositions," in a book which they had never seen, and could not read; and truth, they knew, was the command of God, let pope, cardinal, or archbishop, say what they would to the contrary. Perefixe interdicted their admission to the holy sacrament. "Well, my lord," they replied, "there is in heaven a Judge who reads the heart, and to him we commend our cause." "Ay, ay," rejoined the exemplary prelate. "when we get to heaven it will be time enough to consider that, and see how things go there."

Eight days elapsed; and still no change of purpose, no subscription to the test. Preceded by his crosier, the mitre on his brows, his train borne by ecclesiastics, and followed by a long line of archers, the archbishop reappeared. Much he discoursed respecting his own mildness, and much of the obduracy of the nuns. In proof of both, twenty-three of their number were conveyed to separate places of confinement. But the fruits of her treachery were not reaped by the Sœur Flavie. By the influence of the archbishop, the Sœur Dorothée Perdreau was elected abbess. That lady established her residence at Paris; she effected a final separation of the two monasteries; and gave entertainments at the Parisian convent which might vie with the most brilliant of any which formed the boast of the neighbouring hotels. For ten months her exiled sisters remained in prison. Perefixe then ordered their return to Port-Royal des Champs, there to be excluded from the sacraments of the church, and to die unanointed and unannealed. The recluses of the valley were to be seen there no more. They lived in hiding-places, or pined away in dungeons. Singlin died of extremity of suffering in the Bastille. It must be admitted, that if the existence of the "five propositions" in the *Augustinus* was not verified by the attestation of a score or two of old ladies, Louis and his clergy have not to bear the responsibility of so great a misfortune to the church.

Twelve years before, the miracle of the holy thorn and the genius of Pascal had rescued Port-Royal from impending destruction. A person scarcely less unlike the common herd of mortals than the author of the "Provincial Letters," and whose elevation had been owing to events which some may think more miraculous than the cure of Pascal's niece, now interposed in their behalf, and with not inferior success.

Anne Genevieve de Bourbon was born in the year 1619, in the castle of Vincennes, where her father, Henry, Prince of Orleans, was then confined. The misfortunes of her family, and especially the execution of the constable, Montmorency, her maternal uncle, had predisposed in early youth, to serious thought, a mind distinguished to the last by an insatiable craving for strong emotions. To renounce the world, and to take the veil among the sisterhood of Carmelites of the Faubourg St. Jaques, were the earliest of the projects she had formed to baffle the foul fiend ennui. A counter-project, devised by her mother, was, that the young princess should present herself at a court ball. Maternal authority, perhaps inclination, on the one side, and conscientious scruples on the other, balanced and distressed the spirit of the high-born maiden. She betook herself for guidance to the Faubourg St. Jaques. A council on the arduous question was held with all the form, conventual and theatrical, which the statutes of the order and the fancy of the nuns required or suggested. As presidents, sat two of their number, one impersonating the grace of Penitence, the other the virtue of Discretion. From the judgment-seat so occupied, went forth the sentence, that Anne Genevieve de Bourbon should attend the ball, and should surrender herself "de bonne foi" to all the dresses and ornaments prepared for her; but that in immediate contact with her person she should be armed with the penitential girdle, commonly called a *cilice*. Above the talisman which thus encircled that young and lovely form, glowed the bright panoply of the *marchande des modes*. Beneath it throbbed a heart responsive in every pulse to the new intoxication. Penitence and Discretion took their flight, no more to return till, after the lapse of many a chequered year, the *cilice* was again bound over a heart, then, alas! aching with remorse, and bowed down with the contrite retrospect of many a crime and many a folly. At the hotel de Rambouillet, she was initiated, with her brother, afterwards "the great Condé," into the Parisian mystery of throwing over the cold hard lineaments of downright selfishness, the fine-woven draperies of polite literature, of sentimentality, and of taste. She had scarcely read any books; but she could discourse eloquently on all. Mistress of the histrionic art, all words fell bewitchingly from a voice with which every look, and gesture, and attitude, combined in graceful harmony. De Retz notices the exquisite effect of the sudden bursts of gayety which would at times dispel her habitual, but not inexpressive languor. Sarazin and Voiture were proud to receive their laurels from her hands, or to beg them at her feet. Statesmen and generals sought or seemed to seek, her counsels. Even her mitred correspondents infused into their pastoral admonitions a delicacy and a glow of language, which reveal alike her skill to fascinate, and their desire to please.

Vows of celibacy no longer promised an escape from lassitude. At the age of twenty-three, she gave her hand to Henry D'Orleans, Duc de Longueville, who had already numbered forty-seven. The duke repaired as plenipotentiary to the conferences at Munster. The duchess remained at Paris, the idol of the court. Unexplored, at least by us, be the scandalous chronicle of a scandalous age. She rejoined him in time to shelter, if not entirely to save her reputation. As she floated down the Meuse in a royal progress, (for such it really was,) the sister of Condé was received with more than royal honours. Troops lined the banks; fortresses poured forth their garrisons to welcome her approach; the keys of Namur, then held by Spain, were laid at her feet; complimentary harangues hailed her arrival at Liege, Maestricht, and Ruremonde; and amidst the roar of cannon, and the acclamations of ten thousand voices, the triumphant beauty was restored to the arms of her husband. At Munster she exhibited the state and splendour of a crowned head. But her heart was depressed by ennui, if not agitated by more guilty emotions. Tours were undertaken, palaces built, wars of etiquette were successfully waged with rival princesses; diplomatic intrigues twisted and untwisted; but gloom still settled in the spirits of her to whose diversion all other minds were ministering. She returned to Paris. Condé had exalted the glories of her house. Mazarin got up an Italian opera for her amusement. Benserade and Voiture referred to her award the question then agitating the whole Parisian world, of the comparative excellence of their rival sonnets. She became a mother. On every side the tedium of existence was assailed by new excitement; but melancholy still brooded over her. Relief was, however, at hand. The dissensions, the wars, the intrigues of the *Fronde*, filled the void which nothing else could fill. Her share in that mad revel is known to all the readers of De Retz, La Rochefoucalt, De Monspensier, and De Motteville. Her younger brother, the Prince de Conti, was but a puppet in her hands. With Condé, she quarrelled one day, and made it up the next De Retz was alternately her ruler and her dupe. Marsaillac alone acquired a lasting influence over her mind. He flattered, amused, animated, and governed her, to whose government alone the factious and the frivolous were alike willing to bow. With her infant in her arms, she appeared on the balcony, at the Hotel de Ville, "beautiful," says De Retz, "with her dress apparently, but not really, neglected, while at the Grève, from the pavement to the tiles, was a countless multitude of men shouting with transport, and women shedding tears of tenderness." Never did mob-idolatry assume a more bewitching aspect. Hushed into affectionate silence were the harsh voices of the many-headed monster, as the peerless dame gave birth to "Charles Paris," her second son. Crowded even was that sick-chamber with black-robed counsellors, and plumed officers, soliciting her commands for the defence of the blockaded capital. Peace came, and she met almost on equal terms the haughty widow and mother of the kings of France. For her brother and her husband, she demanded and obtained the government of provinces; for herself a state ball at the Hotel de Ville, with the presence of the queen-mother to grace her triumph; for Marsaillac the entrée at the Louvre in his carriage; for his wife a tabouret. There are limits to human endurance. Against the entrée and the tabouret the whole nobility of France awoke in generous resentment. Astræa once more took her flight. Condé, Conti, and poor De Longueville himself, were conducted to Vincennes; our heroine fled to Normandy. Besieged in the castle of Dieppe, she escaped on foot, and, after a march of some leagues along the coast, reached a fishing-boat, which lay at anchor there, awaiting her arrival. A storm was raging; but, in defiance of all remonstrances, she resolved to embark. In an instant she was struggling for life in the water. Rescued with difficulty, but nothing daunted, she mounted behind a horseman, and for fifteen days evaded the pursuit of her enemies, in mean and desolate hiding-places. At length, reaching Havre, an English vessel conveyed her to Rotterdam. From that disastrous eclipse, she emerged with undiminished splendour. From Stenay, Turenne advanced to meet her at the head of all his forces. She became a party with him to the convention by which the king of Spain bound himself to maintain the war with France till the liberation of the three captive princes; and sixty thousand crowns were promised for the support of the table and equipages of Turenne and the Princesse de Longueville. That more tender bonds than those of war and treason did not unite them, is ascribed by her biographers to her preference for one La Moussaye, the commandant of Stenay. There she braved the denunciations of her sovereign, opposing one manifesto to another, and adding to her other glories the praise of diplomatic eloquence. Again the centre of all intrigue, the delirium, whether ambitious or voluptuous, of her heart, yielded for awhile (and where beats the heart which is not enigmatical?) to remembrances, at once bitter and soothing, of the Carmelites of St. Jaques, with whom, in days of youth and innocency, she had joined in far different aspirations. But in the *phantasmagoria* at Paris, the scenes are again shifted. The Parliaments remonstrate, the princes are enlarged, the cardinal exiled, and a royal declaration attests the innocence of Mademoiselle de Longueville, "Vous n'êtes plus criminelle si ce n'est de lèse amours," was the greeting on this occasion of her favourite Sarazin. She rewarded the poet with an embassy to the Spanish government; for the duchess had now undertaken a negotiation for peace between the two crowns. Her second triumph, however, was still incomplete. She returned in all the pomp of a conqueror to Paris, and once more met on equal terms the majesty of France.

It may reasonably be doubted whether there exists at this day one human being who has found leisure and inclination to study, with exact attention, the history of the wars of the "Fronde." But that they disturbed the peace, and postponed the rising greatness of a mighty nation, they would have as little to commend them to serious regard, as the cabals one may suppose to distract the fair council presiding over the internal economy of Almacks. To assert, during the weakness of a long minority, some popular rights not otherwise to be maintained, and to restore the greater nobility to the powers of which Richelieu had dispossessed them, were indeed motives which gave some show of dignity to the first movements of the Frondeurs; but meaner passions, more frivolous questions, interests more nakedly selfish, or in themselves more contemptible, never before or since roused a people to war, or formed a pretext for rebellion. Cardinals, judges, monarchs, princesses, courtiers, and generals, whirl before the eye in that giddy maze—intriguing, lying, jesting, imprisoning, and killing, as though Bacchus, Momus, and Moloch, had for awhile usurped a joint and absolute dominion over the distracted land. Among the figurantes in this dance of death, none is more conspicuous than the duchesse de Longueville. In the third and last of these preposterous wars, the royal authority triumphed, and her star declined; but it now set to rise again in a new and far purer radiance. Like the wisest of the sons of men, she had applied her heart to see if there was any good thing under the sun; and, like him, she returned with a spirit oppressed by the hopeless pursuit, and proclaiming that all is vanity. "I have no wish so ardent" (such is her confession to the prioress of the Carmelites) "as to see this war at an end, that, for the rest of my days, I may dwell with you, and apart from all the world besides. Till peace is concluded, I may not do so. My life seems to have been given me but to prove how bitter and how oppressive are the sorrows of this mortal existence. My attachments to it are broken, or rather crushed. Write to me often, and confirm the loathing I feel for this sublunary state.

It was a weary way which the returning penitent had to retrace. Now rising towards the heaven to which she aspired, her fainting spirit would again sink down to the earth she had too much loved. Long and arduous was the struggle—tardy, and to the last precarious, the conquest. But the conquest was achieved. Gainsay it who will, the spirit of man is the not unfrequent, though the hidden scene of revolutions, as real as that which from the seed corrupting in the soil beneath us, draws forth the petals, diffusing on every side their fragrance, and reflecting in every varied hue the light of heaven. He who, with disappointed hopes, and the satiety of all the pleasures which earth has to offer, seeks refuge in that sanctuary which in the heat and confidence of youth he had despised, may well expect that human judges will note the change with incredulity or derision: nor, perhaps, has he much right to complain. There ever must be some ground for others to doubt whether the seeming love of long-neglected virtues be more than a real distaste for long-practised vices. That the *rouée* should pass into the *ennuyée*, and the *ennuyée* into the *devotee*, may appear as natural as that the worm should become a chrysalis, and the chrysalis a butterfly. To the wits be their jests, and to the mockers their gibes. To those who can feel for some of the deepest agonies of our common nature, such jests will be at least less welcome than the belief that, when innocence is gone, all is not lost; and the conviction, that over the soul blighted and depraved by criminal indulgence, may still be effectually brooding an influence more gentle than a mother's love, and mightier than all the confederate powers of darkness and of guilt. Few readers of the later correspondence of the duchess of Longueville, will doubt that the change in her character was the result of such a renovating energy. At the age of thirty-four she finally retired from the cabals in which she had borne so conspicuous a part. Condé had now taken up arms against her native country, and Turenne commanded her armies. The duchess mourned alike the success and the reverses of her brother. De Longueville, a kind-hearted man, hailed with unabated tenderness her return to the paths of wisdom and peace. She watched with true congenial care over his declining years, and even extended her kindness to one of his illegitimate daughters.

Touched by her altered conduct, the king and the queen's mother admitted her not merely to their favour, but to a high place in their regard; nor are there many incidents in the life of Louis so amiable, as the affectionate gentleness of his demeanour to this once dangerous but now self-humbled enemy. On the death of her husband she expended immense sums in the attempt to repair, in some degree, the calamities which the war of the princes had inflicted on the peasantry. In a single year she restored to freedom, at her own expense, nine hundred persons imprisoned for debt; and had a list of no less than four thousand prisoners subsisting altogether on her bounty. The austere penances which at least attested her sincerity, were combined on all becoming occasions with the princely magnificence due to her exalted station. Her eldest son, the Comte Du Dunois, a feeble-minded youth, turned Jesuit, took orders, escaped to Rome, and was placed under permanent restraint. The Comte St. Paul, her only other child, was a wild profligate. He enjoyed ecclesiastical benefices of the annual value of 50,000 crowns, which she compelled him to resign unconditionally to the disposal of the king. Lous revered and applauded such unwonted disinterestedness, and exerted all the magic of his flattery to win her back again to the court and to the world. But she had learned a salutary lesson of self-distrust. In the valley of Port-Royal she built a modest residence, where she found repose, if not serenity; and soothed with humble hopes a spirit too deeply contrite to be visited by more buoyant feelings. Her own hand has traced the history of her declining years; nor have the most pathetic preachers of that age of pulpit eloquence bequeathed to us a more impressive admonition. Whoever would learn what are the woes of ministering, by reckless self-indulgence, to the morbid cravings of the heart for excitement; or how revolting is the late return to more tranquil pursuits; or how gloomy is the shadow which criminal passions, even when exercised, will yet cast over the soul they have long possessed; or how, through that gloom, a light pure as its divine original, may dawn over the benighted mind with still expanding warmth and brightness — should study the Letters and the Confessions of Anne Genevieve, duchesse de Longueville.

To explain what was the task she undertook, we must return a little in our former steps.

Such, and so conversant with the ways of the world was the diplomatist who at length appeared for the rescue of the ladies of Port-Royal. No less skilful hand could have unravelled the folds in which the subject had been wrapped by intrigue and bigotry.

The original anti-Jansenist test had been promulgated by a synod of the clergy of France, adopted by the Sorbonne, and enforced by Louis. To the remonstrances of the nuns against being required to attest by their signatures a matter of fact of which they had, and could have no knowledge, the king had answered only by reiterating the demand for a "pure and simple" subscription. "His majesty," observed the princess de Guemene, "is supreme. He can make princes of the blood, bishops and archbishops. Why not martyrs *also?*" *It was* a branch of the royal prerogative which he was nothing loathe to exercise De Retz abdicated the see of Paris, and was succeeded by De Marca, the author of the Formulary. Availing themselves of so happy an occasion, the Jesuits at Clermont drew up a thesis, in which was propounded, for the acceptance of the faithful, the naked dogma of papal infallibility, not only on points of doctrine but as to mere matters of fact. Arnauld and his friends protested. Their protest was refuted by the hand and the torch of one of the great polemics of that age—the public executioner. De Marca did not live long; and his death brought with it a truce in this holy war. His successor in the see of Paris, M. de Perifixe, resumed it, but with greater subtlety. He taught that it was enough if a matter of fact, asserted by the pope, were believed not *d'une foi divine*, but *d'une foi humaine*. Whether, in the Virgilian elysium, the recompense awarded to the inventors of useful arts awaits the authors of useful distinctions has not been revealed to us; but if so, De Perifixe may there have found his recompense. On earth it was his hard fate to be refuted by Nicole, to be laughed at by the Parisians, and to be opposed by the ladies of Port-Royal. They had no faith, divine or human, and they would profess none, as to the contents of a large folio written in a language of which they were entirely ignorant. "Pure as angels," said the incensed archbishop; "they are proud as devils!" How he punished their pride has already been recorded.

When a great dignitary has lost his temper, there is nothing which he should more studiously avoid than the being hooked into the sort of contemporary record which the French call a *procés verbal*. In the midst of the nuns of Port-Royal, De Perifixe had stormed and scolded more in the style of a *poissarde* than of an archbishop of Paris; and when the chronicle of all his sayings and doings on the occasion stole into light, with all the forms of notarial certificates, he found himself, to his unutterable dismay, the hero of as broad a farce as had ever delighted that laughter-loving city. It was the single joke of which the nuns had ever been either the willing or the unintentional authors; and they soon found to their cost that it was no light matter to have directed the current of ridicule against an archiepiscopal, and, through him, against a royal censor.

The invincible opposition of the Port-Royalists to the test, had awakened a more extended resistance. Men had begun to deny the right of assemblies of the clergy, or of the king himself, to impose such subscriptions. To retreat was, however, no longer possible. Louis, therefore, by the advice of the Jesuits, desired the pope himself first to draw up a formula, which should declare his own infallible knowledge of matters of fact; and then to require the universal acceptance of it. Alexander the Seventh exultingly complied. Subscription to De Marca's test was now exacted by papal authority, with the addition that the subscribers should call on the Deity himself to attest their sincerity. To this demand the great body of the clergy of France submitted, but still the resistance of the nuns of Port-Royal was unsubdued. Four years of persecution—

of mean, unmanly, worrying persecution—followed. The history of it fills many volumes of the conventual annals, exciting in the mind of him who reads them, feelings of amazement and disgust, of respect and pity, strong enough to carry him through what it must be confessed is but a wearisome task. From the poor remnant of earthly comforts which these aged women had retained, the mean-spirited king, his bigoted confessors, and his absurd archbishop, daily stole whatever could be so pilfered. From their means of preparing the world where the wicked cease from troubling, every deduction was made which sacerdotal tyranny could enforce. But no tyranny could induce them to call on the God of truth to attest a lie. One after another went down, with no priestly absolution, to graves which no priest would bless; strong, even amidst the weakness and the mortal agonies of nature, in the assurance, that the path to heaven could not be found in disobedience to the immutable laws which Heaven itself had established.

Among the bishops of France, four had been faithful enough to insist on the *droit* and the *fait*. In publishing the papal bull, they attached to it an express statement of their dissent from this new pretension of Rome. Of these prelates, one was a brother of the great Arnauld, and bore the same name. Alexander the Seventh was now on his death-bed; he had even received extreme unction. But at the awful hour he retained enough of human or of papal feeling to launch against the four prelates, a brief full of menaces, which it devolved on his successor, Rospigliosi, to execute. But Clement the Ninth was a man of far greater and more Christian spirit. He had mourned over the distractions of the church, and had made it his appropriate glory to mediate between the contending crowns of Spain and Portugal. To him the duchesse de Longueville addressed herself on behalf of Port-Royal, in a letter of the most insinuating and impressive eloquence. His nuncio at Paris was made to feel all the powers of that fascinating influence which she still knew how to employ. At her hotel, and in her presence, a secret committee met daily for the management of this affair. It was composed of three bishops, aided by Arnauld and Nicole. Condé himself was induced by his sister to lend the weight of his authority to her projects. Even Le Tellier was circumvented by the toil spread for him by this great mistress of intrigue. For nearly eighteen months she laboured to overcome the obstacles which the pride of Rome and of Louis, and the ill-will of the Father Annat, his confessor, opposed to her. All difficulties at length yielded to her perseverance and her diplomatic skill. The four bishops were content to denounce the "five propositions" as heretical, and to promise "a submission of respect and discipline" as to the *fact*, declaring that "they would not contest the papal decision, but would maintain an absolute silence on the subject." One of them insisted on adding an express statement of the infallibility of the church respecting such matters of fact as the contents of a book. Clement the Ninth was, however, satisfied. Peace was restored to the Gallican church. Medals were struck, speeches made, and solemn, audiences accorded by Louis to Arnauld and his associates. De Saci and his fellow-prisoners were set at liberty. Port-Royal was once more permitted to recruit her monastery, to open her schools, and to give shelter to her dispersed recluses. Among the events which signalized the pacification of Clement the Ninth, one demands especial notice. Malebranche had signed the Formulary. He now frankly avowed that he had condemned Jansenius without reading his book, and implored the pardon of God and of man for his guilty compliance. It may perhaps be consolatory to some, in our own times, to be informed, that in censuring as heretical the book of a professor of divinity, of which they knew nothing but the title-page, they might have pleaded the example of so great a man—a comfort, however, to which they will not be entitled, unless they imitate also the example of his repentance.

Ten years elapsed from this pacification before the close of the extraordinary career of the duchess of Longueville; and they were years distinguished in the chronicle of Port-Royal by little else than the peaceful lives and the tranquil deaths of many of the inhabitants of the valley. In their annals are to be found more than a century of names, to which their admirers have promised not only an eternal reward, but such immortality as the world has to bestow. Overburdened as we are by the ever-increasing debt of admiration to the illustrious dead, these promises will hardly be fulfilled, at least by our busy age: nor is it easy even for one who has carefully travelled through the whole of these biographies, to select from among the female candidates for posthumous renown, those to whom such homage is especially due. Their portraitures have a strong resemblance to each other. To each, in her turn, is awarded the praise of passive virtue, of fervent piety, and of austerities from which nature shrinks. If a sense of the ludicrous will occasionally provoke a passive smile, or if a sigh must now and then be given to the melancholy superstitions of which they were the blameless victims, it is at least impossible to contemplate, irreverently or unmoved, the image of purity and peace, of mutual kindness, and cheerful acquiescence in the Divine will, which discloses itself at each successive aspect of that holy sisterhood.

The sternest Protestant cannot rouse himself at once from the influence of this course of reading: nor resume with an effort his conviction, that it is amidst the charities of domestic life that female virtue finds the highest exercise, and female piety the most sublime elevation. He knows, indeed, that exuberant as is the charter of his faith in models of every human virtue, and in precepts of wisdom under every varied form, it contains not so much as a single example, or a solitary admonition, from which the confessors of Port-Royal could have shown that a retreat to such cloisters was in accordance with the revealed will of God. He knows also, that thus to counteract the eternal laws of nature, and the manifest designs of Providence, must be folly.

however specious the pretext or solemn the guise which such folly may assume. He is assured that filial affection, cheerfully, temperately, bountifully, and thankfully using the gifts of Heaven, is the best tribute which man can render to Him who claims for himself the name and the character of a Father. But with all this knowledge, the disciple of Luther or of Calvin will yet close the *vies edificates* and the *necrologies* of these holy women, not without a reluctance to doubt, and a wish to believe, that they really occupied the high and awful station to which they aspired; and stood apart from the world, its pollutions, and its cares, to offer with purer hearts than others, and with more acceptable intercessions, the sacrifice of an uninterrupted worship, replete with blessings to themselves and to mankind. Peace then to their errors, and unquoted be any of the innumerable extravagances which abound in the records of their lives. To the recluses who shared, without ever breaking their solitude, we rather turn for illustrations of the spirit which animated and characterized the valley of Port-Royal.

On the pacification of Clement IX., Louis Sebastian le Nain de Tillemont, who had been educated in the schools of Nicole and Lancelot, returned in the maturity of his manhood to a hermitage which he had erected near the court-yard of the abbey. Such had been his attainments as a boy, that the pupil had soon exhausted the resources of those profound teachers, and in his twentieth year had commenced those works on ecclesiastical history, which have placed him in the very foremost rank, if not at the head, of all who have laboured in that fertile though rugged field. To the culture of it, his life was unceasingly devoted. Though under the direction of De Saci he had obtained admission to holy orders, he refused all the rich preferments pressed on him by the admirers of his genius. Year after year passed over him, unmarked by any event which even the pen of his affectionate biographer, Fontaine, could record. "He lived," says that amiable writer, "alone, and with no witness but God himself, who was ever present with him, and who was all in all to him." It was only in an habitual and placid communion with that one associate, that he sought relief from his gigantic toils; and with a spirit recruited by that communion, he returned to the society of the emperors, the popes, the fathers, and the saints, who were to him as companions and as friends. To a man long conversant with the anxieties of a secular calling, the soft lights and the harmonious repose of such a picture may perhaps exhibit a delusive aspect; yet it can hardly be a delusion to believe, that for such colloquy with the minds which yet live in books, and with that Mind which is the source of all life, would be well exchanged whatever ambition, society, fame, or fortune, have to confer on their most favoured votaries.

So at least judged one, whom fame and fortune wooed with their most alluring smiles. Racine had been trained at Port-Royal, in the same schools and by the same masters as Tillemont. For the great dramatist, no sympathy could of course be expressed by the austere dwellers in the desert; and perhaps the friendship of Boileau may have consoled him for the alienation of his old teacher Nicole. But when, in his *visionnaires*, that devout and learned man denounced the writers of stage-plays as the *Empoisonneurs publics des ames*, Racine keenly felt and resented the reproach. Like most controversialists, he lived to repent the asperity of his language: but his repentance yielded fruits, the like of which have rarely been gathered from that bitter stem. The author of *Andromaque* not only sought the pardon, and regained the friendship of Arnauld and Nicole, but actually renounced the drama, exhorted his son to abandon poetry, and became the advocate and the historian of Port-Royal, and secured for his bones a resting-place in that consecrated soil. Happily for the world, a method was afterwards discovered of reconciling the exercise of Racine's genius with the severe principles which Nicole had instilled into him when a boy, and had revived with such decisive effect in his riper days. *Esther* and *Athalie* were allowed, even at Port-Royal, to be works not unseemly for a man whose single talent was that of writing verses, and who, if he could do nothing better, was at least acknowledged to do that well. But alas for human consistency! He who traced those majestic scenes where reliance on the Divine arm triumphs over all human regards and terrors, was doomed himself to pine away and to die of a hard saying of the hard master it was his ill fate to serve. His guilt was to have drawn up a Memoir on the means of relieving the starving poor at Paris. His punishment, the indignant exclamation of the great Louis, "Because he is an all-accomplished versifier, does he presume that he knows every thing? Because he is a great poet, does he mean to become a minister?" Well might the sensitive spirit which such a feather could crush, wish with Wolsey that he had served his God as faithfully as his king, and repine amidst the pageantries of Versailles for the devout composure of Port-Royal.

And many were the eminent men who sought and enjoyed that repose. There dwelt the Prince de Conti, one of the heroes of the Fronde, and still more memorable for his penitence and restitutions; of whom it is recorded, that his young children were so impressed by his absolute devotedness to the Divine will, as to conceal from him the story of Abraham, lest the example of the sacrifice of Isaac should be imitated at their own expense. There, too, resided the Duc de Laincourt, on whom fortune had exhausted all her bounties, and who, under the loss of them all, rose to the utmost heroism of a meek, unrepining, and cheerful resignation. Pontchateau, a noble, a courtier, an ambassador, and at length the apostolical prothonotary at Rome, brought all the strange vicissitudes of his life to an end, by becoming, under the name of Le Mercier, a common labourer in the gardens, and a devout worshipper in the church of Port-Royal. But this chronicle of worthies, spreading out into an interminable length, must give place to a very brief account of the events which reduced to a desert the solitudes which they had cultivated and adorned.

Amidst the contentions of the Gallican church, full proof had been given of the keen edge of those weapons which might be borrowed from the papal arsenals. It readily occurred to the sufferers, that the resource which the Jesuits had so successfully employed, might be turned against themselves. Pascal had startled the civilized world with the exposure of Molinist errors, hostile not merely to the Catholic creed, but to those principles of virtue which are the very cement of human society. They had imputed to Jansenius five heresies on the obscure subjects of divine grace and human freedom; but who could number the propositions in which Escobar and his associates had spurned the authority of the decalogue itself? The assiduity of the bishops of Arras and St. Pons collected sixty-five of these scandalous dogmas, and these they transmitted to Rome in a memorial of which Nicole was believed to be the writer, and known to be the translator. Righteous, unqualified, and decisive was the papal condemnation of the morality of the Jesuits; but fatal to the repose of Port-Royal was the triumph of one of her brightest ornaments. The duchesse de Longueville had lately died, and with her had disappeared the motive which had induced Louis to show some forbearance to the objects of her affectionate solicitude. Harlai now governed the see of Paris. He was a man of disreputable character, and the mere instrument of the king. Louis was in bondage to Madame de Maintenon, and she to the Jesuits. Their vengeance scarcely sought a pretext, and soon found its gratification.

In the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority, Harlai banished De Saci, Tillemont, and Pontchateau, from the valley of Port-Royal. Nicole and Arnauld sought shelter in the Netherlands from his menaces. The postulantes and scholars were once more expelled, and the admission of novices was again forbidden.

At this epoch, another lady of the house of Arnauld—a cousin and namesake of the Mère Angelique—was invested with the dignity of abbess. Her genius, her virtue, and her learning, are the subject of eulogies too indistinct to be impressive, and too hyperbolical to win implicit credence. Yet, if she was the writer of the memoir in defence of her monastery which bears her name, there was no apparent obstacle, but her sex and her profession, to her successful rivalry of the greatest masters of juridical eloquence in France. Ineffectual, however, would have been all the rhetoric which ever adorned the parliament of Paris, to avert the threatened doom of the stronghold of Jansenism. As he approached the tomb, Harlai's resentment became more deep and settled. He left it a fatal inheritance to his successor, the cardinal de Noailles. A weak and obstinate, but not unfeeling man, De Noailles owed his promotion to the see of Paris to his fixed hostility to Port-Royal, and his known willingness to hazard the odium of subverting that ancient seat of piety and learning. The apology soon presented itself.

Several years had elapsed since the dispute about "Le Droit et le Fait de Jansenius" had apparently reached its close. Revolving this passage of by-gone history, a priest had improved or amused his leisure, by drawing up, for the decision of the Sorbonne, "a case of conscience," which, it must be owned, was a hard problem for the most expert casuist. Of two infallible popes, one had with his dying breath affirmed, as a momentous truth, a proposition, which the other had abandoned, if not retracted. What was it the duty of the faithful to believe on the subject? Forty doctors answered, that it was enough to maintain a respectful silence as to the "fait de Jansenius." Archiepiscopal mandaments, treatises of the learned, royal orders in council, and parliamentary arrêts flew thick and fast through the troubled air, and obscured the daylight of common sense. Again the eldest son of the church invoked the authority of her spiritual father.

In oracular darkness went forth from the Vatican, the sentence, that "respectful silence is not a sufficient deference for apostolical constitutions." This is what is called, in ecclesiastical story, the bull "Vineam Domini Sabaoth." Under shelter of an abstract theorem which no Catholic could deny, it ingeniously concealed the conflict of opinion of two infallible pontiffs. Subscription of their unqualified assent to the bull "Vineam" was demanded from the nuns of Port-Royal, and from them alone. They cheerfully subscribed; but with the addition, that their signature was not to be understood as derogating from what had been determined on the pacification of Clement IX. This was their final and their fatal act of contumacy. Decree after decree was fulminated by De Noailles. He forbade the admission of any new members of their house. He prohibited the election of an abbess. He despoiled them of a large part of their estates. He interdicted to them all the sacraments of the church. He obtained a papal bull for the suppression of their monastery; and, in October, 1709, he carried it into effect by an armed force, under the Marquis D'Argenson.

There is in Westminster Hall a tradition that an eminent advocate of our own times, addressed to the House of Peers during sixteen successive days a speech, in the course of which (such is the calculation) he employed all the words in Johnson's Dictionary, one with another, just thirty-five times over. Neither boasting the copiousness, nor presuming on the patience which were at the command of that great lawyer, we have compressed into a few sentences the history of a contest, which, if not so abridged, would have swollen to the utmost limits of that unparalleled oration. But to those who have leisure for such studies, and who delight in a well-fought forensic field, we can promise that pleasure in the highest degree from a perusal of the contest between the aged ladies of Port-Royal, and their royal, mitred, and ermined antagonists. Never was a more gallant struggle against injustice.

After exhausting all the resources of legal defence, those helpless and apparently feeble women disputed every inch of ground by protests, remonstrances, and petitions, which, for the moment at least, held their assailants in check, and which yet remain a wondrous monument of their perseverance and capacity, and of the absolute self-control which, amidst the outpourings of their griefs, and the exposure of their wrongs, restrained every expression of asperity or resentment. Never was the genius of the family of Arnauld exhibited with greater lustre, and never with less effect.

In a gray autumnal morning, a long file of armed horsemen, under the command of D'Argenson, was seen to issue from the woods which overhung the ill-fated monastery. In the name of Louis he demanded and obtained admission into that sacred enclosure. Seated on the abbatial throne, he summoned the nuns into his presence. They appeared before him veiled, silent, and submissive. Their papers, their title-deeds, and their property were then seized, and proclamation made of a royal decree which directed their immediate exile. It was instantly carried into effect. Far and wide, along the summits of the neighbouring hills, might be seen a thronging multitude of the peasants whom they had instructed, and of the poor whom they had relieved. Bitter cries of indignation and of grief, joined with fervent prayers, arose from these helpless people, as, one after another, the nuns entered the carriages drawn up for their reception. Each pursued her solitary journey to the prison destined for her. Of these venerable women, some had passed their eightieth year, and the youngest was far advanced in life. Labouring under paralysis and other infirmities of old age, several of them reached at once their prisons and their graves. Others died under the distress and fatigues of their journey. Some possessed energies which no sufferings could subdue. Madame de Remicourt, for example, was kept for two years in solitary confinement; in a cell lighted and ventilated only through the chimney; without fire, society, or books. "You may persecute, but you will never change Madame de Remicourt," said the archbishop; "for" (such was his profound view of the phenomenon) "she has a square head, and people with square heads are always obstinate." Last in the number of exiles appeared at the gates of the abbey, the prioress Louise de St. Anastasie Mesnil de Courtiaux. She had seen her aged sisters one by one quit for ever the abode, the associates, and the employments of their lives. To each she had given her parting benediction. She shed no tear, she breathed no murmur, nor for a moment betrayed the dignity of her office, or the constancy of her mind. "Be faithful to the end," were the last words which she addressed to the last companion of her sorrows. And nobly did she fulfil her own counsels. She was conducted to a convent, where, under a close guard, she was compelled to endure the utmost rigours of a jail. Deprived of all those religious comforts which it is in the power of man to minister, she enjoyed a solace, and found a strength, which it was not in the power of man to take away. In common with the greater part of her fellow-sufferers, she died with no priestly absolution, and was consigned to an unhallowed grave. They died the martyrs of sincerity; strong in the faith that a lie must ever be hateful in the sight of God, though infallible popes should exact it, or an infallible church, as represented by cardinals and confessors, should persuade it.

Unsatiated by the calamities of the nuns, the vengeance of the enemies of Port-Royal was directed against the buildings where they had dwelt, the sacred edifice where they had worshipped, and the tombs in which their dead had been interred. The monastery and the adjacent church were overthrown from their foundations. Workmen, prepared by hard drinking for their task, broke open the graves in which the nuns and recluses of former times had been interred. With obscene ribaldry, and outrages too disgusting to be detailed, they piled up a loathsome heap of bones and corpses, on which the dogs were permitted to feed. What remained was thrown into a pit, prepared for the purpose, near the neighbouring church-yard of St. Lambert.

A wooden cross, erected by the villagers, marked the spot where many a pilgrim resorted to pray for the souls of the departed, and for his own. At length no trace remained of the fortress of Jansenism to offend the eye of the Jesuits, or to perpetuate the memory of the illustrious dead with whom they had so long contended. The solitary Gothic arch, the water-mill, and the dovecot, rising from the banks of the pool, with the decayed towers and the farmhouse on the slopes of the valley, are all that now attest that it was once the crowded abode of the wise, the learned, and the good. In that spot, however, may still be seen the winding brook, the verdant hills, and the quiet meadows, nature's indestructible monuments to the devout men and holy women who nurtured there affections which made them lovely in their lives, and hopes which rendered them triumphant in death. Nor in her long roll of martyrs has history to record the names of any who suffered with greater constancy, or in a nobler cause; for their conflict was with the very church they most profoundly revered, and their cause was that of devotedness to sincerity and the abhorrence of falsehood.

Amongst the interpreters of the counsels of Divine Providence in that age, there were not wanting many who found, in the calamities which overwhelmed the declining years of Louis, the retribution of an avenging Deity for the wrongs inflicted on Port-Royal. If it were given to man to decipher the mysterious characters engraven on the scroll of this world's history, it might not be difficult to find, in the annals of his reign, other and yet more weighty reasons for the awakening of Nemesis in France at the commencement of the eighteenth century. But of the mere chronological fact, there is no doubt. The details of the three Dauphins, and the victories of Eugene and Marlborough, followed hard on the dispersion of the nuns. With his dying breath, Louis cast the responsibility on the Jesuits who stood round his bed. "If, indeed, you have misled and deceived me"—such was his last address to his confessors—"you are deeply guilty, for in truth I acted in good faith. I sincerely sought the peace of the church." The humiliation of his spiritual advisers quickly followed. It was preceded by the retirement and death of Madame de Maintenon, who had both provoked and derided the sufferings of the Port-Royalists. The very type of mediocrity out of place, she is to our mind the least winning of all the ladies of equivocal or desperate reputation who in modern times have stood on the steps of European thrones. Her power was sustained by the feebleness of the mind she had subdued, and by the craftiness of those who had subjugated her own. Her prudery and her religiousness, such as it was, served but to deepen the aversion which her intriguing, selfish, narrow-minded, and bigoted spirit excite and justify; although, in her own view of the matter, she probably hoped to propitiate the favour of Heaven and the applause of the world, by directing against the unoffending women of Port-Royal the deadly wrath of the worn-out debauchee, whose jaded spirits and unquiet conscience it was her daily task to sustain and flatter. De Noailles, the instrument of her cruelty, lived to bewail his guilt with such strange agonies of remorse as to rescue his memory from all feelings of hatred, although it is difficult to contemplate without some failure of respect, the exhibition of emotions, which, however just in themselves, deprived their victim of all powers of self-control, and of every semblance of decorous composure. His howlings are described by the witness of them, to have been more like those of a wild beast or a maniac, than of a reasonable man.

If these slight notices of the heroes and heroines of Port-Royal, (slight indeed, when compared with the original materials from which they have been drawn,) should be ascribed by any one to a pen plighted to do suit and service to the cause of Rome, no surmise could be wider of the mark. No Protestant can read the writings of the Port-Royalists themselves, without gratitude for his deliverance from the superstitions of a church which calls herself Catholic, and boasts that she is eternal. That the Church of Rome may flourish as long as the race of man shall endure, is indeed a conclusion which may reasonably be adopted by him who divines the future only from the past. For where is the land, or what the historical period, in which a conspicuous place has not been held by phenomena essentially the same, however circumstantially different? In what age has man not been a worshipper of the visible? In what country has imagination—the sensuous property of the mind—failed to triumph over those mental powers which are purely contemplative? Who can discover a period in which religion has not more or less assumed the form of a compromise between the self-dependence and the self-distrust of her votaries—between their abasement to human authority and their conviction of its worthlessness—between their awe of the divine power and their habitual revolt against the divine will? Of every such compromise, the indications have been the same—a worshipper of pomp and ceremonial, a spiritual despotism exercised by a sacerdotal caste, bodily penances and costly expiations, and the constant intervention of man, and of the works of man, between the worshipper and the supreme object of his worship. So long as human nature shall continue what it is, the religion of human nature will be unchanged. The Church of Rome will be eternal, if man, such as he now is, is himself eternal.

But for every labour under the sun, says the Wise Man, there is a time. There is a time for bearing testimony against the errors of Rome, why not also a time for testifying to the sublime virtues with which those errors have been so often associated? Are we for ever to admit and never to practise the duties of kindness and mutual forbearance? Does Christianity consist in a vivid perception of the faults, and an obtuse blindness to the merits of those who differ from us? Is charity a virtue only when we ourselves are the objects of it? Is there not a church as pure and more catholic than those of Oxford or Rome—a church comprehending within its limits every human being who, according to the measure of the knowledge placed within his reach, strives habitually to be conformed to the will of the common Father of us all? To indulge hope beyond the pale of some narrow communion, has, by each Christian society in its turn, been denounced as a daring presumption. Yet the hope has come to all, and with her faith and charity, her inseparable companions. Amidst the shock of contending creeds, and the uproar of anathemas, they who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, have listened to gentler and more kindly sounds. Good men may debate as polemics, but they will feel as Christians. On the universal mind of Christendom is indelibly engraven one image, towards which the eyes of all are more or less earnestly directed. Whoever has himself caught any resemblance, however faint and imperfect, to that divine and benignant Original, has in his measure learned to recognise a brother wherever he can discern the same resemblance.*

There is an essential unity in that kingdom which is not of this world. But within the provinces of that mighty state there is room for endless varieties of administration, and for local laws and customs widely differing from each other. The unity consists in the one object of worship—the one object of affiance—the one source of virtue—the one cementing principle of mutual love, which pervade and animate the whole. The diversities are, and must be, as numerous and intractable as are the essential distinctions which nature, habit, and circumstances have created amongst men. Uniformity of creeds, of discipline, of ritual, and of ceremonies, in such a world as ours!—

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* See on this subject a book entitled "Catholic Christianity," the anonymous work of the Rev. E. M'Vicar, now a minister of the Church of Scotland in Ceylon. Why such a book should not have attained an extensive celebrity, or why such a writer should have been permitted to quit his native land, are questions to which we fear no satisfactory answer could be given by the dispensers of fame or of church preferment.

a world where no two men are not as distinguishable in their mental as in their physical aspect; where every petty community has its separate system of civil government; where all that meets the eye, and all that arrests the ear, has the stamp of boundless and infinite variety! What are the harmonies of tone, of colour, and of form, but the result of contrasts—of contrasts held in subordination to one pervading principle, which reconciles without confounding the component elements of the music, the painting, or the structure? In the physical works of God, beauty could have no existence without endless diversities. Why assume that in religious society—a work not less surely to be ascribed to the supreme author of all things—this law is absolutely reversed? Were it possible to subdue that innate tendency of the human mind, which compels men to differ in religious opinions and observances, at least as widely as on all other subjects, what would be the results of such a triumph? Where would then be the free comparison, and the continual enlargement of thought; where the self-distrusts which are the springs of humility, or the mutual dependencies which are the bonds of love? He who made us with this infinite variety in our intellectual and physical constitution, must have foreseen, and foreseeing, must have intended, a corresponding dissimilarity in the opinions of his creatures on all questions submitted to their judgment, and proposed for their acceptance. For truth is his law; and if all will profess to think alike, all must live in the habitual violation of it.

Zeal for uniformity attests the latent distrusts, not the firm convictions of the zealot. In proportion to the strength of our self-reliance, is our indifference to the multiplication of suffrages in favour of our own judgment. Our minds are steeped in imagery; and where the visible form is not, the impalpable spirit escapes the notice of the unreflecting multitude. In common hands, analysis stops at the species or the genus, and cannot rise to the order or the class. To distinguish birds from fishes, beasts from insects, limits the efforts of the vulgar observer of the face of nature. But Cuvier could trace the sublime unity, the universal type, the fontal Idea existing in the creative intelligence, which connects as one the mammoth and the snail. So, common observers can distinguish from each other the different varieties of religious society, and can rise no higher. Where one assembly worships with harmonies of music, fumes of incense, ancient liturgies, and a gorgeous ceremonial, and another listens to the unaided voice of a single pastor, they can perceive and record the differences; but the hidden ties which unite them both escape such observation. All appears as contrast, and all ministers to antipathy and discord. It is our belief that these things may be rightly viewed in a different aspect, and yet with the most severe conformity to the divine will, whether as intimated by natural religion, or as revealed in holy scripture. We believe that, in the judgment of an enlightened charity, many Christian societies, who are accustomed to denounce each other's errors, will at length come to be regarded as members in common of the one great and comprehensive church, in which diversities of forms are harmonized by an all-pervading unity of spirit. For ourselves, at least, we should deeply regret to conclude that we were aliens from that great Christian commonwealth of which the nuns and recluses of the valley of Port-Royal were members, and members assuredly of no common excellence.

IGNATIUS LOYOLA AND HIS ASSOCIATES.*

[Edinburgh Review, 1842.]

On the dawn of the day which, in the year 1534, the Church of Rome celebrated the feast of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady, a little company of men, whose vestments bespoke their religious character, emerged in solemn procession from the deep shadows cast by the towers of Notre Dame over the silent city below them. In a silence not less profound, except when broken by the chant of the matins appropriate to that sacred season, they climbed the hill of martyrs, and descended into the crypt, which then ascertained the spot where the apostle of France had won the crown of martyrdom. With a stately though halting gait, as one accustomed to military command, marched at their head a man of swarthy complexion, bald-headed and of middle stature, who had passed the meridian of life: his deep-set eyes glowing as with a perennial fire, from beneath brows, which, had phrenology then been born, she might have portrayed in her loftiest style, but which, without her aid, announced a commission from on high to subjugate and to rule mankind. So majestic, indeed, was the aspect of Ignatius Loyola, that, during the sixteenth century few, if any of the books of his order appeared without the impress of that imperial countenance. Beside him in the chapel of St. Denys knelt another worshipper, whose manly bearing, buoyant step, clear blue eye, and finely-chiseled features, contrasted strangely with the solemnities in which he was engaged. Then in early manhood, Francis Xavier united in his person the dignity befitting his birth as a grandee of Spain, and the grace which should adorn a page of the queen of Castile and Arragon. Not less incongruous with the scene in which they bore their parts, were the slight forms of the boy Alphonso Salmeron and of his bosom friend Jaygo Laynez, the destined successor of Ignatius in his spiritual dynasty. With them Nicholas Alphonso Bobadilla, and Simon Rodriguez—the first a teacher, the second a student of philosophy—prostrated themselves before the altar, where ministered Peter Faber, once a shepherd in the mountains of Savoy, but now a priest in holy orders. By his hands was distributed to his associates the seeming bread, over which he had uttered words of more than miraculous efficacy; and then were lifted up their united voices, uttering, in low but distinct articulation, an oath, at the deep significance of which the nations might have trembled or rejoiced. Never did human lips pronounce a vow more religiously observed, or pregnant with results more momentous.

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* *Exercitia Spiritualia S. P. Ignatii Loyolæ, cum Versione literali ex Autographo Hispanico præmittuntur* R. P. Joannis Roothaan, *præpositi Generalis Societatis, Jesu, Literæ Encyclicæ ad Patres et Fratres ejusdem Societatis, de Spiritualium Exercitiorum S. P. N. Studio et Usu.* Londini, typis C. Richards. 1837.

Descended from an illustrious family, Ignatius had in his youth been a courtier and a cavalier, and if not a poet at least a cultivator of poetry. At the siege of Pampeluna his leg was broken, and, after the failure of mere vulgar leeches, was set by a touch from the hand of the prince of apostles. Yet St. Peter's therapeutic skill was less perfect than might have been expected from so exalted a chirurgeon; for a splinter still protruded through the skin, and the limb was shrunk and shortened. To regain his fair proportions, Ignatius had himself literally stretched on the rack; and expiated, by a long confinement to his couch, this singular experiment to reduce his refractory bones and sinews. Books of knight-errantry relieved the lassitude of sickness, and, when these were exhausted, he betook himself to a series of still more marvellous romances. In the legends of the Saints the disabled soldier discovered a new field of emulation and of glory. Compared with their self-conquests and their high rewards, the achievements and the renown of Roland and of Amadis waxed dim. Compared with the peerless damsels for whose smiles Paladins had fought and died, how transcendently glorious the image of feminine loveliness and angelic purity which had irradiated the hermit's cell and the path of the wayworn pilgrims! Far as the heavens are above the earth would be the plighted fealty of the knight of the Virgin mother beyond the noblest devotion of mere human chivalry. In her service he would cast his shield over the church which ascribed to her more than celestial dignities; and bathe in the blood of her enemies the sword once desecrated to the mean ends of worldly ambition. Nor were these vows unheeded by her to whom they were addressed. Environed in light, and clasping her infant to her bosom, she revealed herself to the adoring gaze of her champion. At that heavenly vision, all fantasies of worldly and sensual delight, like exorcised demons, fled from his soul into an eternal exile. He rose, suspended at her shrine his secular weapons, performed there his nocturnal vigils, and with returning day retired to consecrate his future life to the glory of the *Virgo Deipara*.

To these erotic dreams succeeded stern realities; convulsive agonies of prayer, wailings of remorse, and self-inflicted bodily torments. Exchanging dresses with a beggar, he lined his gaberdine with prickly thorns, fasted to the verge of starvation, assumed the demeanour of an idiot, became too loathsome for human contact, and then, plunging into a gloomy cavern, surrendered himself up to such wrestlings with the evil spirit, and to such vicissitudes of rapture and despair, that in the storm of turbid passions his reason had nearly given way. Friendly hands dragged him from his hiding-place; and hands, in intention at least, not less friendly, recorded his feverish ravings. At one time he conversed with voices audible to no ear but his; at another, he sought to propitiate him before whom he trembled, by expiations which would have been more fitly offered to Moloch. Spiritual doctors ministered to his relief, but they prescribed in vain. Too simple for their subtilized perception was the simple truth, that in revealing himself to mankind in the character of a father, that awful Being has claimed as peculiarly his own the gentlest, the kindest, and the most confiding affections of our nature.

At the verge of madness Ignatius paused. That noble intellect was not to be whelmed beneath the tempests in which so many have sunk, nor was his deliverance to be accomplished by any vulgar methods. Standing on the steps of a Dominican church he recited the office of Our Lady, when suddenly heaven itself was laid open to the eye of the worshipper. That ineffable mystery, which the author of the Athanasian creed has laboured to enunciate in words, was disclosed to him as an object not of faith but of actual sight. The past ages of the world were rolled back in his presence, and he beheld the material fabric of things rising into being, and perceived the motives which had prompted the exercise of the creative energy. To his spiritualized sense was disclosed the actual process by which the host is transubstantiated; and the other Christian verities which it is permitted to common men to receive but as exercises of their belief, now became to him the objects of immediate inspection and of direct consciousness. For eight successive days his body reposed in an unbroken trance; while his spirit thus imbibed disclosures for which the tongues of men have no appropriate language. In a volume of fourscore leaves he attempted indeed to impart them; but, dark with excess of light, his words held the learned and the ignorant alike in speechless wonder.

Ignatius returned to this sublunary scene with a mission not unmeet for an envoy from the empyrean world, of which he had thus become a temporary denizen. He returned to establish on earth a theocracy, of which he should himself be the first administrator, and to which every tribe and kindred of men should be subject. He returned no longer a sordid half-distracted anchorite, but, strange to tell, a man distinguished not more by the gigantic magnitude of his designs, than by the clear good sense, the profound sagacity, the calm perseverance, and the flexible address with which he was to pursue them. History affords no more perfect illustration how readily delirious enthusiasm and the shrewdness of the exchange may combine and harmonize in minds of the heroic order. A Swedenborg-Franklin, reconciling in himself these antagonist propensities, is no monster of the fancy.

On his restoration to human society, Ignatius reappeared in the garb, and addressed himself to the occupations of other religious men. The first fruits of his labours was the book of which we have transcribed the title-page. It was originally written in Spanish, and appeared in an inaccurate Latin version. By the order of the present pope, Loyola's manuscript, still remaining in the Vatican, has been again translated. In this new form the book is commended to the devout study of the faithful by a bull of Pope Paul III., and by an encyclical epistle from the present general of the order of Jesus. To so august a sanction, slight indeed is the aid which can be given by the suffrage of northern heretics. Yet on this subject the chair of Knox, if now filled by himself, would not be very widely at variance with the throne of St. Peter. The "Spiritual Exercises" form a manual of what may be called "the act of conversion." It proposes a scheme of self-discipline by which, in the course of four weeks, that mighty work is to be accomplished. In the first, the penitent is conducted through a series of dark retrospects to abase, and of gloomy prospects to alarm him. These ends obtained, he is during the next seven days to enrol himself—such is the military style of the book—in the army of the faithful, studying the sacred biography of the Divine Leader of that elect host, and choosing with extreme caution the plan of life, religious or secular, in which he may be best able to tread in his steps, and to bear the standard emblematic at once of suffering and of conquest. To sustain the soldier of the cross in this protracted warfare, his spiritual eye is, during the third of his solitary weeks, to be fixed in a reverential scrutiny into that unfathomable abyss of wo, into which a descent was once made to rescue the race of Adam from the grasp of their mortal enemies; and then seven suns are to rise and set while the still secluded but now disenthralled spirit is to chant triumphant hallelujahs, elevating her desires heavenward, contemplating glories hitherto unimaginable, and mysteries never before revealed; till the sacred exercises close with an absolute surrender of all the joys and interests of this sublunary state, as a holocaust, to be consumed by the undying flame of divine love on the altar of the regenerate heart.

He must have been deeply read in the nature of man, who should have predicted such first fruits as these from the restored health of the distracted visionary, who had alternately sounded the base strings of humility on earth, and the living chords which vibrate with spontaneous harmonies along the seventh *heavens*. A closer survey of the book will but enhance the wonder. To transmute profligates into converts, by a process of which, during any one of her revolutions round our planet, the moon is to witness the commencement and the close, might perhaps seem like a plagiarism from the academies of Laputa. But in his great, and indeed his only extant work, Ignatius Loyola is no dreamer. By force of an instinct with which such minds as his alone are gifted, he could assume the character to which the shrewd, the practical, and the worldly-wise aspire, even when abandoning himself to ecstasies which they are alike unable to comprehend or to endure. His mind resembled the body of his great disciple, Francis Xavier, which, as he preached or baptized, rose majestically towards the skies, while his feet (the pious curiosity of his hearers ascertained the fact,) retained their firm hold on the earth below. If the spiritual exercises were designed to excite, they were not less intended to control and to regulate, religious sensibilities. To exalt the spirit above terrestrial objects was scarcely more his aim, than to disenchant mankind of the self-deceits by which that exaltation is usually attempted. The book, it is true, indicates a tone of feeling utterly removed from that which animates the gay and the busy scenes of life; but it could not have been written except by one accustomed to observe those scenes with the keenest scrutiny, and to study the actors in them with the most profound discernment. To this commendation must be added the praise (to borrow terms but too familiar) of evangelical orthodoxy. A Protestant synod might indeed have extracted from the pages of Ignatius many propositions to anathematize; but they could also have drawn from them much to confirm the doctrines to which their confessions had given such emphatic prominency. If he yielded to the demigods of Rome what we must regard as an idolatrous homage, it would be mere prejudice to deny that his supreme adoration was reserved for that awful Being to whom alone it was due. If he ascribed to merely ritual expiations a value of which we believe them to be altogether destitute, yet were all his mighty powers held in the most earnest and submissive affiance in the divine nature, as revealed under the veil of human infirmity and of more than human suffering. After the lapse of two centuries, Philip Doddridge, than whom no man ever breathed more freely on earth the atmosphere of heaven, produced a work of which the Spiritual Exercises might have afforded the model—so many are still the points of contact between those who, ranging themselves round the great object of Christianity as their common centre, occupy the most opposite positions in that expanded circle.

From the publication of the "Spiritual Exercises" to the Vow of Montmartre, nine years elapsed. They wore away in pilgrimages, in feats of asceticism, in the working of miracles, and in escapes all but miraculous, from dangers which the martial spirit of the saint, no less than his piety, impelled him to incur. In the caverns of Monreza he had vowed to scale the heights of '*perfection*' and it therefore behooved him thus to climb that obstinate eminence, in the path already trodden by all the canonized and beatified heroes of the church. But he had also vowed to conduct his fellow-pilgrims from the city of destruction to the land of Beulah. In prison and in shipwreck, fainting with hunger or wasted with disease, his inflexible spirit still brooded over that bright, though as yet shapeless vision; until at length it assumed a coherent form as he knelt on the mount of Olives, and traced the last indelible foot-print of the ascending Redeemer of mankind. At that hallowed spot had ended the weary way of Him who had bowed the heavens, and came down to execute on earth a mission of unutterable love and matchless self-denial; and there was revealed to the prophetic gaze of the future Founder of the order of Jesus, (no seer-like genius kindled by high resolves,) the long line of missionaries who, animated by his example, and guided by his instructions, should proclaim that holy name from the rising to the setting sun. It was indeed a futurity perceptible only to the telescopic eye of faith. At the mature age of thirty, possessing no language but his own, no science but that of the camp, and no literature beyond the biographies of Paladins, and of saints, he became the self-destined teacher of the future teachers of the world. Hoping against hope, he returned to Barcelona, and there, as the class-fellow of little children, commenced the study of the first rudiments of the Latin tongue.

Among the established *facetiæ* of the stage, are the distractions of dramatic Eloisas under the tutorship of their Abelards, in the attempt to conjugate *Amo*. Few play-wrights, probably, have been aware that the jest had its type, if not its origin, in the scholastic experiences of Ignatius Loyola. At the same critical point, and in the same manner, a malignant spirit arrested his advance in the grammar. On each successive inflection of the verb, corresponding elevations heavenwards were excited in his soul by the demon, who, assuming the garb of an angel of light, thus succeeded in disturbing his memory. To baffle his insidious enemy, the harassed scholar employed the pedagogue to make liberal use of that discipline of which who can ever forget the efficacy or the pain? The exorcism was complete. *Amo*, in all her affectionate moods, and changeful tenses, became familiar as household words. Thus Thomas à Kempis was made to speak intelligibly. Erasmus also revealed his hidden treasures of learning and wit, though ultimately exiled from the future schools of the Jesuits, for the same offence of having disturbed the thoughts of his devout reader. Energy won her accustomed triumphs, and, in the year 1528, he became a student of the Humanities, and of what was then called philosophy, at the University of Paris.

Of the seven decades of human life, the brightest and the best, in which other men achieve or contend for distinction, was devoted by Ignatius to the studies preparatory to his great undertaking. Grave professors examined him on their prælections, and, when these were over, he sought the means of subsistence by traversing the Netherlands and England as a beggar. Unheeded and despised as he sat at the feet of the learned, or solicited alms of the rich, he was still maturing in the recesses of his bosom designs more lofty than the highest to which the monarchs of the houses of Valois or of Tudor had ever dared to aspire. In the University of Paris he at length found the means of carrying into effect the cherished purposes of so many years. It was the heroic age of Spain, and the countrymen of Gonsalvo and Cortes lent a willing ear to counsels of daring on any field of adventure, whether secular or spiritual. His companions in study thus became his disciples in religion. Nor were his the common-place methods of making converts. To the contemplative and the timid, he enjoined hardy exercises of active virtue. To the gay and ardent, he appeared in a spirit still more buoyant than their own. To a debauchee, whom nothing else could move, he presented himself neck-deep in a pool of frozen water, to teach the more impressively the duty of subduing the carnal appetites. To an obdurate priest, he made a general confession of his own sins, with such agonies of remorse and shame, as to break up, by force of sympathy, the fountains of penitence in the bosom of the confessor. Nay, he even engaged at billiards with a joyous lover of the game, on condition that the defeated player should serve his antagonist for a month; and the victorious saint enforced the penalty by consigning his adversary a month of secluded devotion. Others yielded at once and without a struggle to the united influence of his sanctity and genius; and it is remarkable that, from these more docile converts, he selected, with but two exceptions, the original members of his infant order. Having performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, they all swore on the consecrated host in the crypt of St. Denys, to accompany their spiritual father on a mission to Palestine; or, if that should be impracticable, to submit themselves to the vicar of Christ, to be disposed of as missionaries at his pleasure.

Impetuous as had been the temper of Ignatius in early life, he had learned to be patient of the slow growth of great designs. Leaving his disciples to complete their studies at Paris under the care of Peter Faber, he returned to Spain to recruit their number, to mature his plans, and, perhaps, to escape from a too familiar intercourse with his future subjects. In the winter of 1536, they commenced their pilgrimage to the eternal city. Xavier was their leader. Accomplished in all courtly exercises, he prepared for his journey by binding tight cords round his arms and legs, in holy revenge for the pleasure which their graceful agility had once afforded him; and pursued his way with Spartan constancy, till the corroded flesh closed obstinately over the ligatures. Miracle, the prompt handmaid of energies like his, burst the bands which no surgeon could extricate; and her presence was attested by the toils which his loosened limbs immediately endured in the menial service of his fellow travellers. At Venice they rejoined their leader, and there employed themselves in mi nistering to the patients in the hospitals. Foremost in every act of intrepid self-mortification, Xavier here signalized his zeal by exploits, the mere recital of which would derange the stomachs of ordinary men. While courting all the physical tortures of purgatory, his soul, however, inhaled the anticipated raptures of Paradise. Twice these penances and raptures brought him to the gates of death; and, in his last extremity, he caused himself to be borne to places of public resort, that his ghastly aspect might teach the awful lessons which his tongue was no longer able to pronounce.

Such prodigies, whether enacted by the saints of Rome or by those of Benares, exhibit a sovereignty of the spiritual over the animal nature, which can hardly be contemplated without some feelings akin to reverence. But, on the whole, the hooked Faqueer spinning round his gibbet is the more respectable suicide of the two; for his homage is, at least, meet for the deity he worships. He whose name had been assumed by Ignatius and his followers, equally victorious over the stoical illusions and the lower affections of our nature, had been accustomed to seek repose among the domestic charities of life, and to accept such blameless solaces as life has to offer to the weary and the heavy-laden; nor could services less in harmony with his serene self-reverence have been presented to him, than the vehement emotions, the squalid filth, and the lacerated frames of the first members of the society of Jesus. Loyola himself tolerated, encouraged, and shared these extravagances. His countenance was as haggard, his flagellations as cruel, and his couch and diet as sordid as the rest. They who will conquer crowns, whether ghostly or secular, must needs tread in slippery places. He saw his comrades faint and die with the extremity of their sufferings, and assuming the character of an inspired prophet, promoted, by predicting, their recovery. One of the gentlest and most patient of them, Rodriguez, flying for relief to a solitary hermitage, found his retreat obstructed by a man of terrible aspect and gigantic stature, armed with a naked sword and breathing menaces. Hosez, another of his associates, happening to die at the moment when Ignatius, prostrate before the altar, was reciting from the *Confiteor* the words, 'et omnibus sanctis,' that countless host was revealed to the eye of the saint; and among them, resplendent in glory, appeared his deceased friend, to sustain and animate the hopes of his surviving brethren. As he journeyed with Laynez, he saw a still more awful vision. It exhibited that Being whom no eye hath seen, and whom no tongue may lightly name, and with him the eternal Son, bearing a heavy cross, and uttering the welcome assurance, "I will be propitious to you at Rome."

These, however, were but the auxiliary and occasional arts (if so they must be termed) by which the sovereignty of Ignatius was established. It behooved him to acquire the unhesitating submission of noble minds, ignited by a zeal as intense and as enduring as his own; and it was on a far loftier basis than that of *bodily penances* or ecstatic dreams, that for ten successive years their initiatory discipline had been conducted. Wildly as their leader may have described his survey of the celestial regions, and of their triumphant inmates, he had anxiously weighed the state of the world in which he dwelt, and the nature of his fellow sojourners there. He was intimately aware of the effects on human character of self-acquaintance, of action, and of suffering. He therefore required his disciples to scrutinize the recesses and the workings of their own hearts, till the aching sense found relief rather than excitement, in turning from the wonders and the shame within, to the mysteries and the glories of the world of unembodied spirits. He trained them to ceaseless activity, until the transmutation of means into ends was complete; and efforts, at first the most irksome, had become spontaneous and even grateful exercises. He accustomed them to every form of privation and voluntary pain, until fortitude, matured into habit, had been the source of enjoyments, as real as to the luxurious they are incomprehensible. He rendered them stoics, mystics, enthusiasts, and then combined all into an institute, than which no human association was ever more emphatically practical, or more to the purpose and the time.

Of all the occupations to which man can devote the earlier years of life, none probably leaves on the character an impress so deep and indelible as the profession of arms. In no other calling are the whole range of our sympathetic affections, whether kindly or the reverse, called into such habitual and active exercise; nor does any other stimulate the mere intellectual powers with a force so irresistible, when once they are effectually aroused from their accustomed torpor. Loyola was a soldier to the last breath he drew, a general whose authority none might question, a comrade on whose cordiality all might rely, sustaining all the dangers and hardships he exacted of his followers, and in his religious campaigns a strategist of consummate skill and most comprehensive survey. It was his maxim that war ought to be aggressive, and that even an inadequate force might be wisely weakened by detachments on a distant service, if the prospect of success was such, that the vague and perhaps exaggerated rumour of it would strike terror into nearer foes, and animate the hopes of irresolute allies. To conquer Lutheranism, by converting to the faith of Rome the barbarous or half-civilized nations of the earth, was, therefore, among the earliest of his projects; and his searching eye had scanned the spirits of his lieutenants to discover which of them was best adapted for enterprises so replete with difficulty and hazard. It was necessary that he should select men superior, not only to all the allurements of appetite, and the common infirmities of our race, but superior, also, to those temptations to which an inquisitive mind and abilities of a high order expose their possessor. His missionaries must be men prepared to do and to dare, but not much disposed to speculate. They must burn with a zeal which no sufferings or disappointment could extinguish; but must not feel those impulses which might prompt men of large capacity to convert a subordinate into an independent command. Long he weighed, and most sagaciously did he decide this perplexing choice. It fell on many who well fulfilled these conditions, but on none in whom all the requisites for such a service met so marvellously as on him who had borne himself so bravely in the chapel of St. Denys, and with such strange mortifications of the flesh in the pilgrimage to Rome.

It was in the year 1506 that Francis Xavier, the youngest child of a numerous family, was born in the castle of his ancestors in the Pyrenees. Robust and active, of a gay humour and ardent spirit, the young mountaineer listened with a throbbing heart to the military legends of his house, and to the inward voice which spoke of days to come, when his illustrious lineage should derive new splendour from his own achievements. But the hearts of his parents yearned over the son of their old age; and the enthusiasm which would have borne him to the pursuit of glory in the camp, was diverted by their counsels to the less hazardous contest for literary eminence at the University of Paris. From the embrace of Aristotle and his commentators, he would, however, have been prematurely withdrawn by the failure of his resources, (for the lords of Xavier were not wealthy,) if a domestic prophetess (his eldest sister) had not been inspired to reveal his marvellous career and immortal recompense. For a child destined to have altars raised to his name throughout the Catholic church, and masses chanted in his honour till time should be no longer, every sacrifice was wisely made; and he was thus enabled to struggle on at the college of St. Barbara, till he had become qualified to earn his own maintenance as a public teacher of philosophy. His chair was crowded by the studious, and his society courted by the gay, the noble, and the rich. It was courted, also, by one who stood aloof from the thronging multitude; among them, but not of them. Sordid in dress but of lofty bearing, at once unimpassioned and intensely earnest, abstemious of speech, yet occasionally uttering, in deep and most melodious tones, words of strange significance, Ignatius Loyola was gradually working over the mind of his young companion a spell which no difference of taste, of habits, or of age, was of power to subdue. Potent as it was, the charm was long resisted. Hilarity was the native and indispensable element of Francis Xavier, and in his grave monitor he found an exhaustless topic of mirth and raillery. Armed with satire, which was not always playful, the light heart of youth contended, as best it might, against the solemn impressions which he could neither welcome nor avoid. Whether he partook of the frivolities in which he delighted, or in the disquisitions in which he excelled, or traced the windings of the Seine through the forest which then lined its banks, Ignatius was still at hand to discuss with him the charms of society, of learning, or of nature; but, whatever had been the theme, it was still closed by the same awful inquiry, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The world which Xavier had sought to gain, was indeed already exhibiting to him its accustomed treachery. It had given him amusement and applause; but with his self-government had stolen from him his pupils and his emoluments. Ignatius recruited both. He became the eulogist of the genius and the eloquence of his friend, and, as he presented to him the scholars attracted by these panegyrics, would repeat them in the presence of the delighted teacher; and then, as his kindling eye attested the sense of conscious and acknowledged merit, would check the rising exultation by the ever-recurring question, "What shall it profit?" Improvidence squandered these new resources; but nothing could damp the zeal of Ignatius. There he was again, though himself the poorest of the poor, ministering to the wants of Xavier, from a purse filled by the alms he had solicited; but there again was also the same unvarying demand, urged in the same rich though solemn cadence, "What shall it profit?" In the unrelaxing grasp of the strong man—at once forgiven and assisted, rebuked and beloved by his stern associate—Xavier gradually yielded to the fascination. He became, like his master, impassive, at least in appearance, to all sublunary pains and pleasures; and having performed the initiatory rite of the Spiritual Exercises, excelled all his brethren of the society of Jesus in the fervour of his devotion and the austerity of his self-discipline.

Whatever might have been his reward in another life, his name would have probably left no trace in the world's records, if John III. of Portugal, resolving to plant the Christian faith on the Indian territories which had become subject to the dominion or influence of his crown, had not petitioned the pope to select some fit leader in this peaceful crusade. On the advice of Ignatius, the choice of the holy father fell on Francis Xavier. A happier selection could not have been made, nor was a summons to toil, to suffering, and to death, ever so joyously received. In the visions of the night he had often groaned under the incumbent weight of a wild Indian, of ebon hue and gigantic stature, seated on his shoulders; and he had often traversed tempestuous seas, enduring shipwreck and famine, persecution and danger, in all their most ghastly forms; and as each peril was encountered, his panting soul had invoked, in still greater abundance, the means of making such glorious sacrifices for the conversion of mankind. When the clearer sense and the approaching accomplishment of these dark intimations were disclosed to him, passionate sobs attested the rapture which his tongue could not speak. Light of heart, and joyful in discourse, he conducted his fellow-pilgrims from Rome to Lisbon, across the Pyrenees. As he descended their southern slopes, there rose to his sight the towers where he had enjoyed the sports of childhood, and woven the day-dreams of youth; where still lived the mother, who for eighteen years had daily watched and blessed him, and the saintly sister whose inspired voice had foretold his high vocation. It was all too high for the momentary intrusion of the holiest of merely human feelings. He was on his way with tidings of mercy to a fallen world, and he had not one hour to waste, nor one parting tear to bestow on those whom he best loved and most revered, and whom, in this life, he could never hope to meet again.

We are not left to conjecture in what light his conduct was regarded. "I care little, most illustrious doctor, for the judgment of men and least of all for their judgment who decide before they hear and before they understand," was his half-sportive, half-indignant answer to the remonstrances of a grave and well beneficed kinsman, (a shrewd, thriving, hospitable, much-respected man, no unlikely candidate for the mitre, and a candidate too, in his own drowsy way, for amaranthine crowns and celestial blessedness,) who very plausibly believed his nephew mad. Mad or sober, he was at least impelled by a force, at the first shock of which the united common sense and respectability of mankind must needs fall to pieces—the force of will concentrated on one great end, and elevated above the misty regions of doubt, into that unclouded atmosphere where, attended by her handmaids, hope and courage, joy and fortitude, faith converts the future into the present, and casts the brightest hues over objects the most repulsive to human sense, and the most painful to our feeble nature.

As the vessel in which Xavier embarked for India fell down the Tagus and shook out her reefs to the wind, many an eye was dimmed with unwonted tears; for she bore a regiment of a thousand men to re-enforce the garrison of Goa; nor could the bravest of that gallant host gaze on the receding land without foreboding that he might never see again those dark chestnut forests and rich orange groves, with the peaceful convents and the long-loved homes reposing in their bosom. The countenance of Xavier alone beamed with delight. He knew that he should never tread his native mountains more; but he was not an exile. He was to depend for food and raiment on the bounty of his fellow-passengers; but no thought for the morrow troubled him. He was going to convert nations, of which he knew neither the language nor even the names; but he felt no misgivings. Worn by incessant sea-sickness, with the refuse food of the lowest seamen for his diet, and the cordage of the ship for his couch, he rendered to the diseased services too revolting to be described; and lived among the dying and the profligate the unwearied minister of consolation and of peace. In the midst of that floating throng, he knew how to create for himself a sacred solitude, and how to mix in all their pursuits in the free spirit of a man of the world, a gentleman, and a scholar. With the viceroy and his officers he talked, as pleased them best, of war or trade, of politics or navigation; and to restrain the common soldiers from gambling, would invent for their amusement less dangerous pastimes, or even hold the stakes for which they played, that by his presence and his gay discourse he might at least check the excesses which he could not prevent.

Five weary months (weary to all but him) *brought the ship to* Mozambique, where an endemic fever threatened a premature grave to the apostle of the Indies. But his was not a spirit to be quenched or allayed by the fiercest paroxysms of disease. At each remission of his malady, he crawled to the beds of his fellow-sufferers to soothe their terrors or assuage their pains. To the eye of any casual observer the most wretched of mankind, in the esteem of his companions the happiest and the most holy, he reached Goa just thirteen months after his departure from Lisbon.

At Goa, Xavier was shocked, and had fear been an element in his nature, would have been dismayed, by the almost universal depravity of the inhabitants. It exhibited itself in those offensive forms which characterize the crimes of civilized men when settled among a feebler race, and released from even the conventional decencies of civilization. Swinging in his hand a large bell, he traversed the streets of the city, and implored the astonished crowd to send their children to him, to be instructed in the religion which they still at least professed. Though he had never been addressed by the soul-stirring name of father, he knew that in the hardest and the most dissolute heart which had once felt the parental instinct, there is one chord which can never be wholly out of tune. A crowd of little ones were quickly placed under his charge. He lived among them as the most laborious of teachers, and the gentlest and the gayest of friends; and then returned them to their homes, that by their more hallowed example they might there impart, with all the unconscious eloquence of filial love, the lessons of wisdom and of piety they had been taught. No cry of human misery reached him in vain. He became an inmate of the hospitals, selecting that of the leprous as the object of his peculiar care. Even in the haunts of debauchery, and at the tables of the profligate, he was to be seen an honoured and a welcome guest; delighting that most unmeet audience with the vivacity of his discourse, and sparing neither pungent jests to render vice ridiculous, nor sportive flatteries to allure the fallen back to the still distasteful paths of soberness and virtue. Strong in purity of purpose, and stronger still in one sacred remembrance, he was content to be called the friend of publicans and sinners. He had in truth long since deserted the standard of prudence, the offspring of forethought, for the banners of wisdom, the child of love, and followed them through perils not to be hazarded under any less triumphant leader.

Rugged were the ways along which he was thus conducted. In those times, as in our own, there was on the Malabar coast a pearl fishery, and then, as now, the pearl-divers formed a separate and degraded caste. It was not till after a residence of twelve months at Goa, that Xavier heard of these people. He heard that they were ignorant and miserable, and he inquired no farther. On that burning shore his bell once more rang out an invitation of mercy, and again were gathered around him troops of inquisitive and docile children. For fifteen months he lived among these abject fishermen, his only food their rice and water, reposing in their huts, and allowing himself but three hours' sleep in the four-and-twenty. He became at once their physician, the arbiter in their disputes, and their advocate for the remission of their annual tribute with the government of Goa. The bishop of that city had assisted him with two interpreters; but his impassioned spirit struggled, and not in vain, for some more direct intercourse with the objects of his care. Committing to memory translations, at the time unintelligible to himself, of the creeds and other symbols of his faith, he recited them with tones and gestures, which spoke at once to the senses and to the hearts of his disciples. All obstacles yielded to his restless zeal. He soon learned to converse, to preach, and to write in their language. Many an humble cottage was surmounted by a crucifix, the mark of its consecration; and many a rude countenance reflected the sorrows and the hopes which they had been taught to associate with that sacred emblem. "I have nothing to add," (the quotation is from one of the letters which at this time he wrote to Loyola,) "but that they who came forth to labour for the salvation of idolaters, receive from on high such consolations, that if there be on earth such a thing as happiness, it is theirs."

If there be such a thing, it is but as the checkered sunshine of a vernal day. A hostile inroad from Madura overwhelmed the poor fishermen who had learned to call Xavier their father, threw down their simple chapels, and drove them for refuge to the barren rocks and sand-banks which line the western shores of the strait of Manar. But their father was at hand to share their affliction, to procure for them from the viceroy at Goa relief and food, and to direct their confidence to a still more powerful Father, whose presence and goodness they might adore even amidst the wreck of all their earthly treasures.

It was a lesson not unmeet for those on whom such treasures had been bestowed in the most ample abundance; and Xavier advanced to Travancore, to teach it there to the Rajah and his courtiers. No facts resting on remote human testimony can be more exempt from doubt than the general outline of the tale which follows. A solitary, poor, and unprotected stranger, he burst through the barriers which separate men of different tongues and races; and with an ease little less than miraculous, established for himself the means of interchanging thoughts with the people of the east. They may have ill-gathered his meaning, but by some mysterious force of sympathy they soon caught his ardour. Idol temples fell by the hands of their former worshippers. Christian churches rose at his bidding; and the kingdom of Travancore was agitated with new ideas and unwonted controversies. The Brahmins argued—as the church by law established has not seldom argued—with fire and sword, and the interdict of earth and water to the enemies of their repose. A foreign invader threw a still heavier sword into the trembling scales. From the southward appeared on the borders of Travancore the same force which had swept away the poor fishermen of Malabar. Some embers of Spanish chivalry still glowed in the bosom of Xavier He flew to the scene of the approaching combat, and there, placing himself in the van of the protecting army, poured forth a passionate prayer to the Lord of Hosts, raised on high his crucifix, and with kindling eyes, and far resounding voice, delivered the behests of Heaven to the impious invaders. So runs the tale, and ends (it is almost superfluous to add) in the rout of the astounded foe. It is a matter of less animated, and perhaps of more authentic history, that for his services in this war Xavier was rewarded by the unbounded gratitude of the rajah, was honoured with the title of his great father, and rescued from all farther Brahminical persecution.

Power and courtly influence form an intoxicating draught even when raised to the lips of an ascetic and a saint. Holy as he was, the great father of the rajah of Travancore seems not entirely to have escaped this feverish thirst. Don Alphonso de Souza, a weak though amiable man, was at that time the viceroy of Portuguese India, and Xavier (such was now his authority) despatched a messenger to Lisbon to demand, rather than to advise his recall. Within the limits of his high profession, (and what subject is wholly foreign to it?) the ambassador of the King of Kings may owe respect, but hardly deference, to any mere earthly monarch. So argued Francis, so judged King John, and so fell Alphonso de Souza, as many a greater statesman has fallen, and may yet fall, under the weight of sacerdotal displeasure. This weakness, however, was not his only recorded fault. Towards the northern extremity of Ceylon lies the island of Manar, a dependency, in Xavier's day, of the adjacent kingdom of Jaffna, where then reigned a sort of oriental Philip II. The islanders had become converts to the Christian faith, and expiated their apostasy by their lives. Six hundred men, women, and children, fell in one royal massacre; and the tragedy was closed by the murder of the eldest son of the king of Jaffna, by his father's orders. Deposition in case of misgovernment, and the transfer to the deposing power of the dominions of the offender, was no invention of Hastings, or of Clive. It is one of the most ancient constitutional maxims of the European dynasties in India. It may even boast the venerable suffrage of St. Francis Xavier. At his instance, De Souza equipped an armament to hurl the guilty ruler of Jaffna from his throne, and to subjugate his territories to the most faithful king. In the invading fleet the indignant saint led the way, with promises of triumphs, both temporal and eternal. But the expedition failed. Cowardice or treachery defeated the design. De Souza paid the usual penalties of ill success. Xavier sailed away to discover other fields of spiritual warfare.

On the Coromandel coast, near the city of Meliapor, might be seen in those times the oratory and the tomb of St. Thomas, the first teacher of Christianity in India. It was in a cool and sequestered grotto that the apostle had been wont to pray; and there yet appeared on the living rock, in bold relief, the cross at which he knelt, with a crystal fountain of medicinal waters gushing from the base of it. On the neighbouring height, a church with a marble altar, stained, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, with the blood of the martyr, ascertained the sacred spot at which his bones had been committed to the dust. To this venerable shrine Xavier retired, to learn the will of Heaven concerning him. If we may believe the oath of one of his fellow-pilgrims, he maintained, on this occasion, for seven successive days an unbroken fast and silence—no unfit preparation for his approaching conflicts. Even around the tomb of the apostle malignant demons prowl by night; and, though strong in the guidance of the Virgin, Xavier not only found himself in their obscene grasp, but received from them blows, such as no weapons in human hands could have inflicted, and which had nearly brought to a close his labours and his life. Baffled by a superior power, the fiends opposed a still more subtle hindrance to his designs against their kingdom. In the garb, and in the outward semblance of a band of choristers, they disturbed his devotions by such soul-subduing strains, that the very harmonies of heaven might seem to have been awakened to divert the Christian warrior from his heavenward path. All in vain their fury and their guile. He found the direction he implored, and the first bark which sailed from the Coromandel shore to the city of Malacca, bore the obedient missionary to that great emporium of eastern commerce.

Thirty years before the arrival of Xavier, Malacca had been conquered by Alphonso Albuquerque. It was a place abandoned to every form of sensual and enervating indulgence. Through her crowded streets a strange and solemn visiter passed along, pealing his faithful bell, and earnestly imploring the prayers of the faithful for that guilty people. Curiosity and alarm soon gave way to ridicule; but Xavier's panoply was complete. The messenger of divine wrath judged this an unfit occasion for courting aversion or contempt. He became the gayest of the gay, and, in address at least, the very model of an accomplished cavalier. Foiled at their own weapons, his dissolute countrymen acknowledged the irresistible authority of a self-devotion so awful, relieved and embellished as it was by every social grace. Thus the work of reformation prospered, or seemed to prosper. Altars rose in the open streets, the confessional was thronged by penitents, translations of devout books were multiplied; and the saint, foremost in every toil, applied himself with all the activity of his spirit to study the structure and the graceful pronunciation of the Malayar tongue. But the plague was not thus to be stayed. A relapse into all their former habits filled up the measure of their crimes. With prophetic voice Xavier announced the impending chastisements of Heaven; and, shaking off from his feet the dust of the obdurate city, pursued his indefatigable way to Amboyna.

That island, then a part of the vast dominions of Portugal in the east, had scarcely witnessed the commencement of Xavier's exertions, when a fleet of Spanish vessels appeared in hostile array on the shores. They were invaders, and even corsairs; for their expedition had been disavowed by Charles V. Pestilence, however, was raging among them; and Xavier was equally ready to hazard his life in the cause of Portugal, or in the service of her afflicted enemies. Day and night he lived in the infected ships, soothing every spiritual distress, and exerting all the magical influence of his name to procure for the sick whatever might contribute to their recovery or soothe their pains. The coals of fire, thus heaped on the heads of the pirates, melted hearts otherwise steeled to pity; and to Xavier belonged the rare, and perhaps the unrivalled, glory of repelling an invasion by no weapons but those of self-denial and love.

But glory, the praise of men or their gratitude, what were these to him? As the Spaniards retired peacefully from Amboyna, he, too, quitted the half-adoring multitude, whom he had rescued from the horrors of a pirates' war, and, spurning all the timid counsel which would have stayed his course, proceeded, as the herald of good tidings, to the half barbarous islands of the neighbouring archipelago. "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there; nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. They are dastardly and alarmed, because there is nothing to be gained there but the souls of men, and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by poison. It is an honour to which such a sinner as I am may not aspire; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for the salvation of a single soul." Nor was this the language of a man insensible to the sorrows of life, or really unaffected by the dangers he had to incur. "Believe me, my beloved brethren," (we quote from a letter written by him at this time to the society at Rome,) "it is in general easy to understand the evangelical maxim, that he who will lose his life shall find it. But when the moment of action has come, and when the sacrifice of life for God is to be really made, oh then, clear as at other times the meaning is, it becomes deeply obscure! so dark, indeed, that he alone can comprehend it, to whom, in his mercy, God himself interprets it. Then it is we know how weak and frail we are."

Weak and frail he may have been; but from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other example of a soul borne onward so triumphantly through distress and danger, in all their most appaling aspects. He battled with hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and assassination, and pursued his mission of love, with even increasing ardour, amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. At the island of Moro (one of the group of the Moluccas) he took his stand at the foot of a volcano; and as the pillar of fire threw up its wreaths to heaven, and the earth tottered beneath him, and the firmament was rent by falling rocks and peals of unintermitting thunder, he pointed to the fierce lightnings, and the river of molten lava, and called on the agitated crowd which clung to him for safety, to repent, and to obey the truth; but he also taught them that the sounds which racked their ears were the groans of the infernal world, and the sights which blasted their eyes, an outbreak from the atmosphere of the place of torment. Repairing for the celebration of mass to some edifice which he had consecrated for the purpose, an earthquake shook the building to its base. The terrified worshippers fled; but Xavier, standing in meek composure before the rocking altar, deliberately completed that mysterious sacrifice, with a faith at least in this instance enviable, in the real presence; rejoicing, as he states in his description of the scene, to perceive that the demons of the island thus attested their flight before the archangel's sword, from the place where they had so long exercised their foul dominion. There is no schoolboy of our days who could not teach much, unsuspected by Francis Xavier, of the laws which govern the material and the spiritual worlds; nor have we many doctors who know as much as he did of the nature of Him by whom the worlds of matter and of spirit were created; for he studied in the school of protracted martyrdom and active philanthropy, where are divulged secrets unknown and unimagined by the wisest and the most learned of ordinary men. Imparting every where such knowledge as he possessed, he ranged over no small part of the Indian archipelago, and at length retraced his steps to Malacca, if even yet his exhortations and his prayers might avert her threatened doom.

It appeared to be drawing nigh. Alaradin, a Mohamedan chief of Sumatra, had laid siege to the place at the head of a powerful fleet and army. Ill-provided for defence by land, the Portuguese garrison was still more unprepared for a naval resistance. Seven shattered barks, unfit for service, formed their whole maritime strength. Universal alarm overspread the city, and the governor himself at once partook and heightened the general panic. Already, thoughts of capitulation had become familiar to the beseiged, and European chivalry had bowed in abject silence to the insulting taunts and haughty menaces of the Moslem. At this moment, in his slight and weather-beaten pinnace, the messenger of peace on earth effected an entrance into the beleaguered harbour. But he came with a loud and indignant summons to the war; for Xavier was still a Spanish cavalier, and he "thought it foul scorn" that gentlemen, subjects of the most faithful king, should thus be bearded by barbaric enemies, and the worshippers of Christ defied by the disciples of the Arabian imposter. He assumed the direction of the defence. By his advice the seven dismantled ships were promptly equipped for sea. He assigned to each a commander; and having animated the crews with promises of both temporal and eternal triumphs, despatched them to meet and conquer the hostile fleet. As they sailed from the harbour the admiral's vessel ran aground and instantly became a wreck. Returning hope and exultation as promptly gave way to terror; and Xavier, the idol of the preceding hour, was now the object of popular fury. He alone retained his serenity. He upbraided the cowardice of the governor, revived the spirits of the troops, and encouraged the multitude with prophecies of success. Again the flotilla sailed, and a sudden tempest drove it to sea. Day after day passed without intelligence of its safety; once more the hearts of the besieged failed them. Rumours of defeat were rife; the Mohamedans had effected a landing within six leagues of the city, and Xavier's name was repeated from mouth to mouth with cries of vengeance. He knelt before the altar, the menacing people scarcely restrained by the sanctity of the place from immolating him there as a victim to his own disastrous counsels. On a sudden his bosom was seen to heave as with some deep emotion; he raised aloft his crucifix, and with a glowing eye, and in tones like one possessed, breathed a short yet passionate prayer for victory. A solemn pause ensued; the dullest eye could see that within that now fainting, pallid, agitated frame, some power more than human was in communion with the weak spirit of man. What might be the ineffable sense thus conveyed from mind to mind, without the aid of symbols or of words! One half hour of deep and agonizing silence held the awe-stricken assembly in breathless expectation — when, bounding on his feet, his countenance radiant with joy, and his voice clear and ringing as with the swelling notes of the trumpet, he exclaimed, "Christ has conquered for us! At this very moment his soldiers are charging our defeated enemies; they have made a great slaughter—we have lost only four of our defenders. On Friday next the intelligence will be here, and we shall then see our fleet again." The catastrophe of such a tale need not to be told. Malacca followed her deliverer, and the troops of the victorious squadron, in solemn procession to the church, where, amidst the roar of cannon, the pealing of anthems, and hymns of adoring gratitude, his inward sense heard and reverenced that inarticulate voice which still reminded him, that for him the hour of repose and triumph might never come, till he should reach that state where sin would no longer demand his rebuke, nor grief his sympathy. He turned from the half-idolatrous shouts of an admiring people, and retraced his toilsome way to the shores of Coromandel.

He returned to Goa a poor and solitary, but no longer an obscure man. From the Indus to the Yellow Sea, had gone forth a vague and marvellous rumour of him. The tale bore that a stranger had appeared in the semblance of a wayworn, abject beggar, who, by some magic influence, and for some inscrutable ends, had bowed the nations to his despotic will, while spurning the wealth, the pleasures, and the homage which they offered to their conqueror. Many were the wonders which travellers had to tell of his progress, and without number the ingenious theories afloat for the solution of them. He possessed the gift or ubiquity, could at the same moment speak in twenty different tongues, on as many dissimilar subjects, was impassive to heat, cold, hunger, and fatigue, held hourly intercourse with invisible beings, the guides or ministers of his designs, raised the dead to life, and could float, when it so pleased him, across the boiling ocean on the wings of the typhoon. Among the listeners to these prodigies had been Auger, a native and inhabitant of Japan. His conscience was burdened with the memory of great crimes, and he had sought relief in vain from many an expiatory rite, and from the tumults of dissipation. In search of the peace he could not find at home, he sailed to Malacca, there to consult with the mysterious person of whose *avatur* he had heard. But Xavier was absent, and the victim of remorse was retracing his melancholy voyage to Japan, when a friendly tempest arrested his retreat, and once more brought him to Malacca. He was attended by two servants, and with them, by Xavier's directions, proceeded to Goa. In these three Japanese, his prophetic eye had at once seen the future instruments of the conversion of their native land; and to that end he instructed them to enter on a systematic course of training in a college, which he had established for such purposes, at the seat of Portuguese empire in the east. At that place Xavier, ere long, rejoined his converts. Such had been their proficiency, that soon after his arrival they were admitted not only into the church by baptism, but into the society of Jesus, by the performance of the spiritual exercises.

The history of Xavier now reaches a not unwelcome pause. He pined for solitude and silence. He had been too long in constant intercourse with man, and found that, however high and holy may be the ends for which social life is cultivated, the habit, if unbroken, will impair that inward sense through which alone the soul can gather any true intimations of her nature and her destiny. He retired to commune with himself in a seclusion where the works of God alone were to be seen, and where no voices could be heard but those which, in each varying cadence, raise an unconscious anthem of praise and adoration to their Creator. There for awhile reposing from labours such as few or any other of the sons of men have undergone, he consumed days and weeks in meditating prospects beyond the reach of any vision unenlarged by the habitual exercise of beneficence and piety. There, too, it may be, (for man must still be human,) he surrendered himself to dreams as baseless, and to ecstasies as devoid of any real meaning, as those which haunt the cell of the maniac. Peace be to the hallucinations, if such they were, by which the giant refreshed his slumbering powers, and from which he roused himself to a conflict never again to be remitted till his frame, yielding to the ceaseless pressure, should sink into a premature but hallowed grave.

Scarcely four years had elapsed from the first discovery of Japan by the Portuguese, when Xavier, attended by Auger and his two servants, sailed from Goa to convert the islanders to the Christian faith. Much good advice had been, as usual, wasted on him by his friends. To Loyola alone he confided the secret of his confidence. "I cannot express to you" (such are his words) "the joy with which I undertake this long voyage; for it is full of *extreme perils,* and we consider a fleet sailing to Japan as eminently prosperous in which one ship out of four is saved. Though the risk far exceeds any which I have hitherto encountered, I shall not decline it; for our Lord has imparted to me an interior revelation of the rich harvest which will one day be gathered from the cross when once planted there." Whatever may be the thought of these voices from within, it is at least clear, that nothing magnanimous or sublime has ever yet proceeded from those who have listened only to the voices from without. But, as if resolved to show that a man may at once act on motives incomprehensible to his fellow mortals, and possess the deepest insight into the motives by which they are habitually governed, Xavier left behind him a code of instructions for his brother missionaries, illuminated in almost every page by that profound sagacity which results from the union of extensive knowledge with acute observation, mellowed by the intuitive wisdom of a compassionate and lowly heart. The science of self-conquest, with a view to conquer the stubborn will of others, the act of winning admission for painful truth, and the duties of fidelity and reverence in the attempt to heal the diseases of the human spirit, were never taught by uninspired man with an eloquence more gentle, or an authority more impressive. A long voyage, pursued through every disaster which the malevolence of man and demons could oppose to his progress, (for he was constrained to sail in a piratical ship, with idols on her deck and whirlwinds in her path,) brought him, in the year 1549, to Japan, there to practise his own lessons, and to give a new example of heroic perseverance.

His arrival had been preceded by what he regarded as fortunate auguries. Certain Portuguese merchants, who had been allowed to reside at the principal seaport, inhabited there a house haunted by spectres. Their presence was usually announced by the din of discordant and agonizing dreams; but when revealed to the eye, presented forms resembling those which may be seen in pictures of the infernal state. Now the merchants, secular men though they were, had exorcised these fiends by carrying the cross in solemn procession through the house; and anxious curiosity pervaded the city for some explanation of the virtue of this new and potent charm. There were also legends current through the country which might be turned to good account. Xaca, the son of Amida, the *Virgo Deipara* of Japan, had passed a life of extreme austerity to expiate the sins of men, and had inculcated a doctrine in which even Christians must recognise a large admixture of sacred truth. Temples in honour of the mother and child overspread the land, and suicidal sacrifices were daily offered in them. The father of lies had farther propped up his kingdom in Japan by a profane parody on the institutions of the Catholic church. Under the name of the Saco, there reigned in sacerdotal supremacy a counterpart of the holy father in Rome, who consecrated the fundi or bishops of this Japanese hierarchy, and regulated at his infallible will whatever related to the rites and ceremonies of public worship. Subordinate to the fundi were the bonzes or priests in holy orders, who, to complete the resemblance, taught, and at least professed to practise, an ascetic discipline. But here the similitude ceases; for, adds the chronicle, they were great knaves and sad hypocrites.

With these foundations on which to build, the ideas which Xavier had to indroduce into the Japanese mind, might not very widely jar with those by which they were preoccupied. Auger, now called Paul of the holy faith, was despatched to his former friend and sovereign, with a picture of the Virgin and the infant Jesus, and the monarch and his courtiers admired, kissed, and worshipped the sacred symbols. Xavier himself (to use his own words) stood by, a mere mute statue; but there was Promethean fire within, and the marble soon found a voice. Of all his philological miracles, this was the most stupendous. He who, in the decline of life, bethinks him of all that he once endured to unlock the sense of Æschylus, and is conscious how stammering has been the speech with which, in later days, he has been wont to mutilate the tongues of Pascal and of Tasso, may think it a fable that in a few brief weeks Xavier could converse and teach intelligibly in the involved and ever-shifting dialects of Japan. Perhaps, had the skeptic ever studied to converse with living men under the impulse of some passion which had absorbed every faculty of his soul, he might relax his incredulity; but, whatever be the solution, the fact is attested on evidence which it would be folly to discredit—that within a very short time Xavier began to open to the Japanese, in their own language and to their perfect understanding, the commission with which he was charged. Such, indeed, was his facility of speech, that he challenged the bonzes to controversies on all the mysterious points of their and his conflicting creeds. The arbiters of the dispute listened as men are apt to listen to the war of words, and many a long-tailed Japanese head was shaken, as if in the hope that the jumbling thoughts within would find their level by the oft-repeated oscillation. It became necessary to resort to other means of winning their assent; and in exploits of asceticism, Xavier had nothing to fear from the rivalry of bonzes, of fundi, or of the great Saco himself. Cangoxima acknowledged, as most other luxurious cities would perhaps acknowledge, that he who had such a mastery of his own appetites and passions, must be animated by some power wholly exempt from that debasing influence. To fortify this salutary though very sound conclusion, Xavier betook himself, (if we may believe his historian,) to the working of miracles. He compelled the fish to fill the nets of the fishermen, and to frequent the bay of Cangoxima, though previously indisposed to do so. He cured the leprous, and he raised the dead. Two bonzes became the first, and indeed the only fruits of his labours. The hearts of their brethren grew harder as the light of truth glowed with increasing but ineffectual brightness around him. The king also withdrew his favour, and Xavier, with two companions, carried the rejected messages of mercy to the neighbouring states of the Japanese empire.

Carrying on his back his only viaticum, the vessels requisite for performing the sacrifice of the mass, he advanced to Firando, at once the seaport and the capital of the kingdom of that name. Some Portuguese ships, riding at anchor there, announced his arrival in all the forms of nautical triumph—flags of every hue floating from the masts, seamen clustering on the yards, cannon roaring from beneath, and trumpets braying from above. Firando was agitated with debate and wonder; all asked, but none could afford, an explanation of the homage rendered by the wealthy traders to the meanest of their countrymen. It was given by the humble pilgrim himself, surrounded in the royal presence by all the pomp which the Europeans could display in his honour. Great was the effect of these auxiliaries to the work of an evangelist; and the modern, like the ancient apostle, ready to become all things to all men, would no longer decline the abasement of assuming for a moment the world's grandeur, when he found that such puerile acts might allure the children of the world to listen to the voice of wisdom. At Meaco, then the seat of empire in Japan, the discovery might be reduced to practice with still more important success, and thitherwards his steps were promptly directed.

Unfamiliar to the ears of us barbarians of the North-Western Ocean are the very names of the seats of Japanese civilization through which his journey lay. At Amanguchi, the capital of Nagoto, he found the hearts of men hardened by sensuality, and his exhortations to repentance were repaid by showers of stones and insults. "A pleasant sort of bonze, indeed, who would allow us but one God and one woman!" was the summary remark with which the luxurious Amanguchians disposed of the teacher and his doctrine. They drove him forth half naked, with no provision but a bag of parched rice, and accompanied only by three of his converts, prepared to share his danger and his reproach.

It was in the depth of winter, dense forests, steep mountains, half-frozen streams, and wastes of untrodden snow, lay in his path to Meaco. An entire month was consumed in traversing the wilderness, and the cruelty and scorn of man not seldom adding bitterness to the rigours of nature. On one occasion the wanderers were overtaken in a thick jungle by a horseman bearing a heavy package. Xavier offered to carry the load, if the rider would requite the service by pointing out his way. The offer was accepted, but hour after hour the horse was urged on at such a pace, and so rapidly sped the panting missionary after him, that his tortured feet and excoriated body sank in seeming death under the protracted effort. In the extremity of his distress no repining word was ever heard to fall from him. He performed this dreadful pilgrimage in silent communion with Him for whom he rejoiced to suffer the loss of all things; or spoke only to sustain the hope and courage of his associates. At length the walls of Meaco were seen, promising a repose not ungrateful even to his adamantine frame and fiery spirit. But repose was no more to visit him. He found the city in all the tumult and horrors of a siege. It was impossible to gain attention to his doctrines amidst the din of arms; for even the Saco or pope of Japan could give heed to none but military topics. Chanting from the Psalmist—When Israel went out of Egypt and the house of Jacob from a strange people, the saint again plunged into the desert, and retraced his steps to Amanguchi.

Xavier describes the Japanese very much as a Roman might have depicted the Greeks in the age of Augustus, as at once intellectual and sensual voluptuaries; on the best possible terms with themselves, a good-humoured but faithless race, equally acute and frivolous, talkative and disputatious—"Their inquisitiveness," he says, "is incredible, especially in their intercourse with strangers, for whom they have not the slightest respect, but make incessant sport of them." Surrounded at Amanguchi, by a crowd of these babblers, he was plied with innumerable questions about the immortality of the soul, the movements of the planets, eclipses, the rainbow—sin, grace, paradise, and hell. He heard and answered. A single response solved all these problems. Astronomers, meteorologists, metaphysicians, and divines, all heard the same sound; but to each it came with a different and an appropriate meaning. So wrote from the very spot Father Anthony Quadros four years after the event; and so the fact may be read in the process of Xavier's canonization. Possessed of so admirable a gift, his progress in the conversion of these once contemptuous people is the less surprising. Their city became the principal seat of learning in Japan, and of course, therefore, the great theatre of controversial debate. Of these polemics there remains a record of no doubtful authenticity, from which disputants of higher name than those of Amanguchi might take some useful lessons in the dialectic art. Thrusts, better made or more skilfully parried, are seldom to be witnessed in the schools of Oxford or of Cambridge.

In the midst of controversies with men, Xavier again heard that inward voice to which he never answered but by instant and unhesitating submission. It summoned him to Fucheo, the capital of the kingdom of Bungo; a city near the sea, and having for its port a place called Figer, where a rich Portuguese merchant ship was then lying. At the approach of the saint (for such he was now universally esteemed) the vessel thundered from all her guns such loud and repeated discharges, that the startled sovereign despatched messengers from Fucheo to ascertain the cause of so universal an uproar. Nothing could exceed the astonishment with which they received the explanation. It was impossible to convey to the monarch's ear so extravagant a tale. A royal salute for the most abject of lazars—for a man, to use their own energetic language—"so abhorred of the earth, that the very vermin which crawled over him loathed their wretched fare." If mortal man ever rose or sunk so far as to *discover, without pain,* that his person was the object of disgust to others, then is there one form of self-dominion in which Francis Xavier has been surpassed. Yielding with no perceptible reluctance to the arguments of his countrymen, and availing himself of the resources at their command, he advanced to Fucheo, preceded by thirty Portuguese clad in rich stuffs, and embellished with chains of gold and precious stones. "Next came, and and next did go," in their gayest apparel, the servants and slaves of the merchants. Then appeared the apostle of the Indies himself, resplendent in green velvet and golden brocade. Chinese tapestry, and silken flags of every brilliant colour, covered the pinnace and the boats in which they were rowed up to the city, and the oars rose and fell to the sound of trumpets, flutes, and hautboys. As the procession drew near to the royal presence, the commander of the ship marched bareheaded, and carrying a wand as the esquire or majordomo of the father. Five others of her principal officers, each bearing some costly article, stepped along, as proud to do such service; while he, in honour of whom it was rendered, moved onwards with the majestic gait of some feudal chieftain marshalling his retainers, with a rich umbrella over him. He traversed a double file of six hundred men-at-arms drawn up for his reception, and interchanged complimentary harangues with his royal host, with all the grace and dignity of a man accustomed to shine in courts, and to hold intercourse with princes.

His majesty of Bungo seems to have borne some resemblance to our own Henry the Eighth, and to have been meditating a revolt from the Saco and his whole spiritual dynasty. Much he said at the first interview, to which no orthodox bonze could listen with composure. It drew down even on his royal head the rebuke of the learned Faxiondono. "How," exclaimed that eminent divine, "dare you undertake the decision of any article of faith without having studied at the University of Fianzima, where alone are to be learned the sacred mysteries of the gods! If you are ignorant, consult the doctors appointed to teach you. Here am I, ready to impart to you all necessary instruction. Anticipating the slow lapse of three centuries, the very genius of a university of still higher pretensions than that of Fianzima breathed through the lips of the sage Faxiondono. But the great "Tractarian" of Bungo provoked replies most unlike those by which his modern successors are assailed. Never was king surrounded by a gayer circle than that which then glittered at the court of Fucheo. The more the bonze lectured on his own sacerdotal authority, the more laughed they. The king himself condescended to aid the general merriment, and congratulated his monitor on the convincing proof he had given of his heavenly mission, by the display of an infernal temper. To Xavier he addressed himself in a far different spirit. On his head the triple crown might have lighted without allaying the thirst of his soul for the conversion of mankind; and the European pomp with which he was for the moment environed, left him still the same living martyr to the faith it was his one object to diffuse. His rich apparel, and the blandishments of the great, served only to present to him, in a new and still more impressive light, the vanity of all sublunary things. He preached, catechized, and disputed, with an ardour and perseverance which threatened his destruction, and alarmed his affectionate followers. "Care not for me," was his answer to their expostulations; "think of me as a man dead to bodily comforts. My food, my rest, my life, are to rescue, from the granary of Satan, the souls for whom God has sent me hither from the ends of the earth." To such fervour the bonzes of Fucheo could offer no effectual resistance. One of the most eminent of their number cast away his idols and became a Christian. Five hundred of his disciples immediately followed his example. The king himself, a dissolute unbeliever, was moved so far (and the concessions of the rulers of the earth must be handsomely acknowledged) as to punish the crimes he still practised; and to confess that the very face of the saint was as a mirror, reflecting by the force of contrast all the hideousness of his own vices. Revolting, indeed, they were, and faithful were the rebukes of the tongue, no less than the countenance of Xavier. A royal convert was about to crown his labours, and the worship of Xaca and Amida seemed waning to its close. It was an occasion which demanded every sacrifice; nor was the demand unanswered.

For thirty years the mysteries of the faith of the bonzes had been taught in the most celebrated of their colleges, by a doctor who had fathomed all divine and human lore; and who, except when he came forth to utter the oracular voice of more than earthly wisdom, withdrew from the sight of men into a sacred retirement, there to hold high converse with the immortals. Fucarondono, for so he was called, announced his purpose to visit the city and palace of Fucheo. As when, in the agony of Argamemnon's camp, the son of Thetis at length grasped his massive spear, and the trembling sea-shores resounded at his steps—so advanced to the war of words the great chieftain of Japanese theology, and so rose the cry of anticipated triumph from the rescued bonzes. Terror seized the licentious king himself, and all foreboded the overthrow of Xavier and Christianity. "Do you know, or rather, do you remember me?" was the inquiry with which this momentous debate was opened. "I never saw you till now," answered the saint. "A man who has dealt with me a thousand times, and who pretends never to have seen me, will be no difficult conquest," rejoined the most profound of the bonzes. "Have you left any of the goods which I bought of you at the port of Frenajona?"—"I was never a merchant," said the missionary, "nor was I ever at Frenajona."—"What a wretched memory!" was the contemptuous reply; "it is precisely five hundred years to-day since you and I met at that celebrated mart, when, by the same token, you sold me a hundred pieces of silk, and an excellent bargain I had of it." From the transmigration of the soul the sage proceeded to unfold the other dark secrets of nature—such as the eternity of matter, the spontaneous self formation of all organized beings, and the progressive cleansing of the human spirit in the nobler and holier, until they attain to a perfect memory of the past, and are enabled to retrace their wanderings from one body to another through all preceding ages—looking down from the pinnacles of accumulated wisdom on the grovelling multitude, whose recollections are confined within the narrow limits of their latest corporeal existence. That Xavier refuted these perplexing arguments, we are assured by a Portuguese bystander who witnessed the debate; though unhappily no record of his arguments has come down to us. "I have," says the historian, "neither science nor presumption enough to detail the subtle and solid reasonings by which the saint destroyed the vain fancies of the bonze."

Yet the victory was incomplete. Having recruited his shattered forces, and accompanied by no less than three thousand bonzes, Fucarondono returned to the attack. On his side, Xavier appeared in the field of controversy attended by the Portuguese officers in their richest apparel. They soon uncovered in his presence, and knelt when they addressed him. Their dispute now turned on many a knotty point;—as, for example, Why did Xavier celebrate masses for the dead, and yet condemn the orthodox Japanese custom of giving to the bonze bills of exchange payable in their favour? So subtle and difficult were their inquiries, that Xavier and his companion, the reporter of the dispute, were compelled to believe that the spirit of evil had suggested them; and that they were successfully answered is ascribed to the incessant prayers which, during the whole contest, the Christians offered for their champion. Of this second polemical campaign we have a minute and animated account. It may be sufficient to extract the conclusion of the royal moderator. "For my own part," he said, "as far as I can judge, I think that father Xavier speaks rationally, and that the rest of you don't know what you are talking about. Men must have clear heads or less violence than you have to understand these difficult questions. If you are deficient in faith, at least employ your reason, which might teach you not to deny truths so evident; and do not bark like so many dogs." So saying, the king of Fungo dissolved the assembly. Royal and judicious as his award appears to have been, our Portuguese chronicler admits that the disputants on either side returned with opinions unchanged; and that, from that day forward, the work of conversion ceased. He applies himself to find a solution of the problem, why men who had been so egregiously refuted should cling to their errors, and why they should obstinately adhere to practices so irrefragably proved to be alike foolish and criminal. The answer, let us hope, is, that the obstinacy of the people of Fungo was a kind of *lusus naturæ*, a peculiarity exclusively their own; that other religious teachers are more candid than the bonzes of Japan, and that no professor of divinity could elsewhere be found so obstinately wedded to his own doctrines as was the learned Fucarondono.

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In such controversies, and in doing the work of an evangelist in every other form, Xavier saw the third year of his residence at Japan gliding away, when tidings of perplexities at the mother church of Goa recalled him thither; across seas so wide and stormy, that even the sacred lust of gold hardly braved them in that infancy of the art of navigation. As his ship drove before the monsoon, dragging after her a smaller bark which she had taken in tow, the connecting ropes were suddenly burst asunder, and in a few minutes the two vessels were no longer in sight. Thrice the sun rose and set on their dark course, the unchained elements roaring as in mad revelry around them, and the ocean seething like a caldron. Xavier's shipmates wept over the loss of friends and kindred in the foundered bark, and shuddered at their own approaching doom. He also wept; but his were grateful tears. As the screaming whirlwind swept over the abyss, the present deity was revealed to his faithful worshipper, shedding tranquillity, and peace, and joy over the sanctuary of a devout and confiding heart. "Mourn not, my friend," was his gay address to Edward de Gama, as he lamented the loss of his brother in the bark; "before three days, the daughter will have returned to her mother." They were weary and anxious days; but, as the third drew towards a close, a sail appeared in the horizon. Defying the adverse winds, she made straight towards them, and at last dropped alongside, as calmly as the sea-bird ends her flight, and furls her ruffled plumage on the swelling surge. The cry of miracle burst from every lip; and well it might. There was the lost bark, and not the bark only, but Xavier himself on board her! What though he had ridden out the tempest in the larger vessel, the stay of their drooping spirits, he had at the same time been in the smaller ship, performing there also the same charitable office; and yet, when the two hailed and spoke each other, there was but one Francis Xavier, and he composedly standing by the side of Edward de Gama on the deck of the "Holy Cross." Such was the name of the commodore's vessel. For her services on this occasion, she obtained a sacred charter of immunity from risks of every kind; and as long as her timbers continued sound, bounded merrily across seas in which no other craft could have lived.

During this wondrous voyage, her deck had often been paced in deep conference by Xavier and Jago de Pereyra, her commander. Though he pursued the calling of a merchant, he had, says the historian, the heart of a prince. Two great objects expanded the thoughts of Pereyra —the one, the conversion of the Chinese empire; the other, his own appointment as ambassador to the celestial court at Pekin. In our puny days, the dreams of traders in the east are of smuggling opium. But in the sixteenth century, no enterprise appeared to them too splendid to contemplate, or too daring to hazard. Before the "Holy Cross" had reached Goa, Pereyra had pledged his whole fortune, Xavier his influence and his life, to this gigantic adventure. In the spring of the following year, the apostle and the ambassador (for so far the project had in a few months been accomplished) sailed from Goa in the "Holy Cross" for the then unexplored coasts of China. As they passed Malacca, tidings came to Xavier of the tardy though true fulfilment of one of his predictions. Pestilence, the minister of divine vengeance, was laying waste that stiff-necked and luxurious people; but the wo he had foretold he was the foremost to alleviate. Heedless of his own safety, he raised the sick in his arms and bore them to the hospitals. He esteemed no time, or place, or office, too sacred to give way to this work of mercy. Ships, colleges, churches, all at his bidding became so many lazarettos. Night and day he lived among the diseased and dying, or quitted them only to beg food or medicine, from door to door, for their relief. For the moment, even China was forgotten; nor would he advance a step though it were to convert to Christianity a third part of the human race, so long as one victim of the plague demanded his sympathy, or could be directed to an ever-present and still more compassionate Comforter. The career of Xavier (though he knew it not) was now drawing to a close; and with him the time was ripe for practising those deeper lessons of wisdom which he had imbibed from his long and arduous discipline.

With her cables bent lay the "Holy Cross" in the port of Malacca, ready at length to convey the embassage to China, when a difficulty arose, which not even the prophetic spirit of Xavier had foreseen. Don Alvaro d'Alayde, the governor, a grandee of high rank, regarded the envoy and his commission with an evil eye. To represent the crown of Portugal to the greatest of earthly monarchs was, he thought, an honour more meet for a son of the house of Alayde, than for a man who had risen from the very dregs of the people. The expected emoluments also exceeded the decencies of a cupidity less than noble. He became of opinion that it was not for the advantage of the service of King John III., that the expedition should advance. Pereyra appeared before him in the humble garb of a suitor, with the offer of thirty thousand crowns as a bribe. All who sighed for the conversion, or for the commerce of China, lent the aid of their intercessions. Envoys, saints, and merchants, united their prayers in vain. Brandishing his cane over their heads, Alvaro swore that, so long as he was governor of Malacca and captain-general of the seas of Portugal, the embassy should move no farther. Week after week was thus consumed, and the season was fast wearing away, when Xavier at length resolved on a measure to be justified even in his eyes only by extreme necessity. A secret of high significance had been buried in his bosom since his departure from Europe. The time for the disclosure of it had come. He produced a papal brief, investing him with the dignity and the powers of apostolical nuncio in the east. One more hindrance to the conversion of China, and the church would clothe her neck with thunders. Alvaro was still unmoved; and sentence of excommunication was solemnly pronounced against him and his abettors. Alvaro answered by sequestering the "Holy Cross" herself. Xavier wrote letters of complaint to the king. Alvaro intercepted them. One appeal was still open to the vicar of Christ. Prostrate before the altar, he invoked the aid of Heaven; and rose with purposes confirmed, and hopes reanimated. In the service of Alvaro, though no longer bearing the embassy to China, the "Holy Cross" was to be despatched to Sancian, an island near the mouth of the Canton river, to which the Portuguese were permitted to resort for trade. Xavier resolved to pursue his voyage so far, and thence proceeded to Macao to preach the gospel there. Imprisonment was sure to follow. But he should have Chinese fellow-prisoners. These at least he might convert; and though his life would pay the forfeit, he should leave behind him in these first Christians a band of missionaries who would propagate through their native land the faith he should only be permitted to plant.

It was a compromise as welcome to Alvaro as to Xavier himself. Again the "Holy Cross" prepared for sea; and the apostle of the Indies, followed by a grateful and admiring people, passed through the gates of Malacca to the beach. Falling on his face to the earth, he poured forth a passionate though silent prayer. His body heaved and shook with the throes of that agonizing hour. What might be the fearful portent none might divine, and none presumed to ask. A contagious terror passed from eye to eye, but every voice was hushed. It was as the calm preceding the first thunder peal which is to rend the firmament. Xavier arose, his countenance no longer beaming with its accustomed grace and tenderness, but glowing with a sacred indignation, like that of Isaiah when breathing forth his inspired menaces against the king of Babylon. Standing on a rock amidst the waters, he loosed his shoes from off his feet, smote them against each other with vehement action, and then casting them from him, as still tainted with the dust of that devoted city, he leaped barefooted into the bark, which bore him away for ever from a place from which he had so long and vainly laboured to avert her impending doom.

She bore him, as he had projected, to the island of Sancian. It was a mere commercial factory; and the merchants who passed the trading season there, vehemently opposed his design of penetrating farther into China. True he had ventured into the forest, against the tigers which infested it, with no other weapon than a vase of holy water; and the savage beasts, sprinkled with that sacred element, had for ever fled the place: but the mandarins were fiercer still than they, and would avenge the preaching of the saint on the inmates of the factory—though most guiltless of any design but that of adding to their heap of crowns and moidores. Long years had now passed away since the voice of Loyola had been heard on the banks of the Seine urging the solemn inquiry, "What shall it profit." But the words still rang on the ear of Xavier, and were still repeated, though in vain to his worldly associates at Sancian. They sailed away with their cargoes, leaving behind them only the "Holy Cross," in charge of the officers of Alvaro, and depriving Xavier of all means of crossing the channel to Macao. They left him destitute of shelter and of food, but not of hope. He had heard that the king of Siam meditated an embassy to China for the following year; and to Siam he resolved to return in Alvaro's vessel, to join himself, if possible, to the Siamese envoys, and so at length force his way into the empire.

But his earthly toils and projects were now to cease for ever. The angel of death appeared with a summons, for which, since death first entered our world, no man was ever more triumphantly prepared. It found him on board the vessel on the point of departing for Siam. At his own request he was removed to the shore, that he might meet his end with the greater composure. Stretched on the naked beach, with the cold blasts of a Chinese winter aggravating his pains, he contended alone with the agonies of the fever which wasted his vital power. It was a solitude and an agony for which the happiest of the sons of men might well have exchanged the dearest society and the purest of the joys of life. It was an agony in which his still uplifted crucifix reminded him of a far more awful wo endured for his deliverance; and a solitude thronged by blessed ministers of peace and consolation, visible in all their bright and lovely aspects to the now unclouded eye of faith; and audible to the dying martyr through the yielding bars of his mortal prison-house, in strains of exulting joy till then unheard and unimagined. Tears burst from his fading eyes, tears of an emotion too big for utterance. In the cold collapse of death his features were for a few brief moments irradiated as with the first beams of approaching glory. He raised himself on his crucifix, and exclaiming, *In te, Domine, speravi—non confundar in æternum!* he bowed his head and died.

Why consume many words in delineating a character which can be disposed of in three? Xavier was a fanatic, a papist, and a Jesuit. Comprehensive and introvertible as the climax is, it yet does not exhaust the censures to which his name is obnoxious. His understanding, that is, the mere cogitative faculty, was deficient in originality, in clearness, and in force. It is difficult to imagine a religious dogma which he would not have embraced, at the command of his teachers, with the same infantine credulity with which he received the creeds and legends they actually imposed upon him. His faith was not victorious over doubt; for doubt never for one passing moment assailed it. Superstition might boast in him one of the most complete as well as one of the most illustrious of her conquests. She led him through a land peopled with visionary forms, and resounding with ideal voices—a land of prodigies and portents, of ineffable discourse and unearthly melodies. She bade him look on this fair world as on some dungeon unvisited by the breath of heaven; and on the glorious face of nature, and the charms of social life, as so many snares and pitfalls for his feet. At her voice he starved and lacerated his body, and rivalled the meanest lazar in filth and wretchedness. Harder still, she sent him forth to establish among half-civilized tribes a worship which to them must have become idolatrous; and to inculcate a morality in which the holier and more arduous virtues were made to yield precedence to ritual forms and outward ceremonies. And yet, never did the polytheism of ancient or of modern Rome assign a seat among the dimi-gods to a hero of nobler mould, or of more exalted magnanimity, than Francis Xavier.

He lived among men as if to show how little the grandeur of the human soul depends on mere intellectual power. His it was to demonstrate with what vivific rays a heart imbued with the love of God and man may warm and kindle the nations; dense as may be the exhalations through which the giant pursues his course from the one end of heaven to the other. Scholars criticised, wits jested, prudent men admonished, and kings opposed him; but on moved Francis Xavier, borne forward by an impulse which crushed and scattered to the winds all such puny obstacles. In ten short years, a solitary wanderer, destitute of all human aid—as if mercy had lent him wings, and faith an impenetrable armour—he traversed oceans, islands, and continents, through a track equal to more than twice the circumference of our globe; every where preaching, disputing, baptizing, and founding Christian churches. There is at least one well authenticated miracle in Xavier's story. It is, that any mortal man should have sustained such toils as he did; and have sustained them too, not merely with composure, but as if in obedience to some indestructible exigency of his nature. "The father master Francis," (the words are those of his associate, Melchior Nunez,) "when labouring for the salvation of idolaters, seemed to act, not by any acquired power, but as by some natural instinct; for he could neither take pleasure nor even exist except in such employments. They were his repose; and when he was leading men to the knowledge, and the love of God, however much he exerted himself, he never appeared to be making any effort."

Seven hundred thousand converts (for in these matters Xavier's worshippers are not parsimonious) are numbered as the fruits of his mission; nor is the extravagance so extreme if the word conversion be understood in the sense in which they used it. Kings, rajahs, and princes were always, when possible, the first objects of his care. Some such conquests he certainly made; and as the flocks would often follow their shepherds, and as the gate into the Christian fold was not made very strait, it may have been entered by many thousands and tens of thousands. But if Xavier taught the mighty of the earth, it was for the sake of the poor and miserable, and with them he chiefly dwelt. He dwelt with them on terms ill enough corresponding with the vulgar notions of a saint. "You, my friends," said he to a band of soldiers who had hidden their cards at his approach, "belong to no religious order, nor can you pass whole days in devotion. Amuse yourselves. To you it is not *forbidden, if you* neither cheat, quarrel, nor swear when you play." Then good-humouredly sitting down in the midst of them, he challenged one of the party to a game at chess; and was found at the board by Don Diego Noragua, whose curiosity had brought him from far to see so holy a man, and to catch some fragments of that solemn discourse which must ever be flowing from his lips. The grandee would have died in the belief that the saint was a hypocrite, unless by good fortune he had afterwards chanced to break in on his retirement, and to find him there suspended between earth and heaven in a rapture of devotion, with a halo of celestial glory encircling his head.

Of such miraculous visitations, nor indeed of any other of his supernatural performances, will any mention be found in the letters of Xavier. Such at least is the result of a careful examination of a considerable series of them. He was too humble a man to think it probable that he should be the depositary of so divine a gift; and too honest to advance any such claims to the admiration of mankind. Indeed, he seems to have been even amused with the facility with which his friends assented to these prodigies. Two of them repeated to him the tale of his having raised a dead child to life, and pressed him to reveal the truth. "What!" he replied, "I raise the dead!" "Can you really believe such a thing of a wretch like me?" Then smiling, he added, "They did indeed place before me a child. They said it was dead, which perhaps was not the case. I told him to get up, and he did so. Do you call that a miracle?" But in this matter Xavier was not allowed to judge for himself. He was a Thaumaturgus in his own despite; and this very denial is quoted by his admirers as a proof of his profound humility. Could he by some second sight have read the bull of his own canonization, he would doubtless, in defiance of his senses, have believed (for belief was always at his command) that the church knew much better than he did; and that he had been reversing the laws of nature without perceiving it; for at the distance of rather more than a half century from his death, Pope Urban VIII., with the unanimous assent of all the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops, in sacred conclave assembled, pledged his papal infallibility to the miracles already recorded, and to many more. And who can be so skeptical as to doubt their reality, when he is informed that depositions taken in proof of them were read before that august assembly; and that the apotheosis was opposed there by a learned person, who appeared at their bar in the character and with the title of "the devil's advocate." A scoffer might indeed suggest that the lawyer betrayed the cause of his client if he really laboured to dispel illusions, and that the father of lies may have secretly instructed his counsel to make a sham fight of it, in order that one lie the more might be acted in the form of a new idol worship. Without exploring so dark a question, it may be seriously regretted that such old wives' fables have been permitted to sully the genuine history of many a man of whom the world was not worthy, and of none more than Francis Xavier. They have long obscured his real glory, and degraded him to the low level of a vulgar hero of ecclesiastical romance. Casting away these puerile embellishments, refused the homage due to genius and to learning, and excluded from the number of those who have aided the progress of speculative truth, he emerges from those lower regions, clad with the mild brilliancy, and resplendent in the matchless beauty which belong to the human nature, when ripening fast into a perfect union with the divine. He had attained to that childlike affiance in the Author of his being, which gives an unrestrained play to every blameless impulse, even when that awful presence is the most habitually felt. His was a sanctity which, at fitting seasons, could even disport itself in jests and trifling. No man, however abject his condition, disgusting his maladies, or hateful his crimes, ever turned to Xavier without learning that there was at least one human heart on which he might repose with all the confidence of a brother's love. To his eye the meanest and the lowest reflected the image of Him whom he followed and adored; nor did he suppose that he could ever serve the Saviour of mankind so acceptably as by ministering to their sorrows, and recalling them into the way of peace. It is easy to smile at his visions, to detect his errors, to ridicule the extravagant austerities of his life; and even to show how much his misguided zeal eventually counteracted his own designs. But with our philosophy, our luxuries, and our wider experience, it is not easy for us to estimate or to comprehend the career of such a man. Between his thoughts and our thoughts there is but little in common. Of our wisdom he knew nothing, and would have despised it if he had. Philanthropy was his passion, reckless daring his delight; and faith glowing in meridian splendour the sunshine in which he walked. He judged or felt (and who shall say that he judged or felt erroneously?) that the church demanded an illustrious sacrifice, and that he was to be the victim; that a voice which had been dumb for fifteen centuries, must at length be raised again, and that to him that voice had been imparted; that a new apostle must go forth to break up the incrustations of man's long-hardened heart, and that to him that apostolate had beed committed. So judging, or so feeling, he obeyed the summons of him whom he esteemed Christ's vicar on earth, and the echoes from no sublunary region which that summons seemed to awaken in his bosom. In holding up to reverential admiration such self-sacrifices as his, slight, indeed, is the danger of stimulating enthusiastic imitators. Enthusiasm! our pulpits distil their bland rhetoric against it; but where is it to be found? Do not our share markets, thronged even by the devout, overlay it—and our rich benefices extinguish it—and our pentecosts, in the dazzling month of May, dissipate it—and our stipendiary missions, and our mitres, decked even in heathen lands with jewels and with lordly titles—do they not, as so many lightning conductors, effectually divert it? There is indeed the lackadaisical enthusiasm of devotional experiences, and the sentimental enthusiasm of religious bazars, and the oratorical enthusiasm of charitable platforms—and the tractarian enthusiasm of well-beneficed ascetics; but in what, except the name, do they resemble "the-God-in-us" enthusiasm of Francis Xavier?—of Xavier the magnanimous, the holy, and the gay; the canonized saint, not of Rome only, but of universal Christendom; who, if at this hour there remained not a solitary Christian to claim and to rejoice in his spiritual ancestry, should yet live in hallowed and everlasting remembrance; as the man who has bequeathed to these later ages, at once the clearest proof and the most illustrious example, that even amidst the enervating arts of our modern civilization, the apostolic energy may still burn with all its primeval ardour in the human soul, when animated and directed by a power more than human.

Xavier died in the year 1552, in the forty-seventh year of his age, and just ten years and a half from his departure from Europe. During his residence in India, he had maintained a frequent correspondence with the general of his order. On either side their letters breathe the tenderness which is an indispensable element of the heroic character — an intense though grave affection, never degenerating into fondness; but chastened, on the side of Xavier by filial reverence, on that of Ignatius by parental authority. It was as a father, or rather as a patriarch, exercising a supreme command over his family, and making laws for their future government, that Ignatius passed the last twenty years of his life. No longer a wanderer, captivating or overawing the minds of men by marvels addressed to their imagination, he dwelt in the ecclesiastical capitol of the west, giving form and substance to the visions which had fallen on him at the mount of Ascension, and had attended him through every succeeding pilgrimage.

It proved, however, no easy task to obtain the requisite papal sanction for the establishment of his order. In that age the regular clergy had to contend with an almost universal unpopularity. To their old enemies, the bishops and secular priests, were added the wits, the reformers, and the Vatican itself. The papal court not unreasonably attributed to their misconduct, a large share of the disasters under which the Church of Rome was suffering. On the principle of opposing new defences to new dangers, the pope had given his confidence and encouragement to the Theatins, and the other isolated preachers who were labouring at once to protect and to purify the fold, by diffusing among them their own deep and genuine spirit of devotion. It seemed bad policy at such a moment to call into existence another religious order, which must be regarded with equal disfavour by these zealous recruits, and by the ancient supporters of the papacy. Nor did the almost morbid prescience of the Vatican fail to perceive how dangerous a rival, even to the successors of St. Peter, might become the general of a society projected on a plan of such stupendous magnitude.

Three years, therefore, were consumed by Ignatius in useless solicitations. He sought to propitiate, not mere mortal man only, but the Deity himself, by the most lavish promises; and is recorded to have pledged himself on one day to the performance of three thousand masses, if so his prayer might be granted. Earth and Heaven seemed equally deaf to his offers, when the terrors of Paul III. were effectually awakened by the progress of the reformers in the very bosom of Italy. Ferrara seemed about to fall as Germany, England, and Switzerland, had fallen; and the consistory became enlightened to see the divine hand in a scheme which they had till then regarded as the workmanship of man, and as wrought with no superhuman purposes. Anxiously and with undisguised reluctance, though, as the event proved, with admirable foresight, Paul III., on the 27th September, 1540, affixed the papal seal to the bull "Regimini," the Magna Charta of the order of Jesus. It affords full internal evidence of the misgivings with which it was issued. "Quamvis Evangelio doceamur, et fide orthodoxâ cognoscamus ac firmiter profiteamur, omnes Christi fideles, Romano pontifici tanquam Capiti, ac Jesu Christi Vicario, subesse, ad majorem tamen nostræ societatis humilitatem, ac perfectam unius cujusque mortificationem, et voluntatum nostrarum abnegationem, summopere conducere judicavimus, singulos nos, ultra illud commune vinculum, speciali voto adstringi, ita ut quidquid Romani pontifices, pro tempore existentes, jusserint"—"quantum in nobis fuerit exequi teneamur."

So wrote the pope in the persons of his new prætorians; and to elect a general of the band, who should guide them to the performance of this vow, was the first care of Ignatius. Twice the unanimous choice of his companions fell on himself. Twice the honour was refused. At length, yielding to the absolute commands of his confessor, he ascended the throne of which he had been so long laying the foundations. Once seated there, his coyness was at an end, and he wielded the sceptre as best becomes an absolute monarch—magnanimously, and with unfaltering decision; beloved, but permitting no rude familiarity; reverenced, but exciting no servile fear; declining no enterprise which high daring might accomplish, and attempting none which headlong ambition might suggest; self-multiplied in the ministers of his will; yielding to them a large and generous confidence, yet trusting no man whom he had not deeply studied; and assigning to none a province beyond the range of his capacity.

Though not in books, yet in the far nobler school of active, and especially of military life, Loyola had learned the great secret of government; at least of his government.

It was, that the social affections, if concentrated within a well-defined circle, possess an intensity and endurance, unrivalled by those passions of which self is the immediate object. He had the sagacity to perceive, that emotions like those with which a Spartan or a Jew had yearned over the land and the institutions of their fathers—emotions stronger than appetite, vanity, ambition, avarice, or death itself—might be kindled in the members of his order; *if he could detect* and grasp those mainsprings of human action of which the Greek and the Hebrew legislators had obtained the mastery. Nor did he seek them in vain.

It is with an audacity approaching to the sublime that Loyola demands the obedience of his subjects—an obedience to he yielded, not in the mere outward act, but by the understanding and the will. "Non intueamini in persona superioris hominem obnoxium erroribus atque miseriis, *sed Christum ipsum*." "Superioris vocem ac jussa non secus ac *Christi* vocem excipiti. Ut statuatis vobiscum quidquid superior præcipit *ipsius Dei* præceptum esse ac voluntatem." He who wrote thus had not lightly observed how the spirit of man groans beneath the weight of its own freedom, and exults in bondage if only permitted to think that the chain has been voluntarily assumed. Nor had he less carefully examined the motives which may stimulate the most submissive to revolt, when he granted to his followers the utmost liberty in outward things which could be reconciled with this inward servitude;—no peculiar habit—no routine of prayers and canticles—no prescribed system of austerities—no monastic seclusion. The enslaved soul was not to be rudely reminded of her slavery. Neither must the frivolous or the feeble-minded have a place in his brotherhood; for he well knew how awful is the might of folly in all sublunary affairs. No one could be admitted who had worn, though but for one day, the habit of any other religious order; for Ignatius must be served by virgin souls and by prejudices of his own engrafting. Stern initiatory discipline must probe the spirits of the professed; for both scandal and danger would attend the faintness of any leader in the host. Gentler probations must suffice for lay or spiritual coadjutors; for every host is incomplete without a body of irregular partisans. But the general himself—the centre and animating spirit of the whole spiritual army—he must rule for life; for ambition and cabal will fill up any short intervals of choice, and the reverence due to royalty is readily impaired by the aspect of dethroned sovereigns. He must be absolute; for human authority can on no other terms exhibit itself as the image of the divine. He must reign at a distance and in solitude; for no government is effective in which imagination has not her work to do. He must be the ultimate depositary of the secrets of the conscience of each of his subjects; for irresistible power may inspire dread but not reverence, unless guided by unlimited knowledge. No subject of his may accept any ecclesiastical or civil dignity; for he must be supreme in rank as in dominion. And the ultimate object of all this scheme of government—it must be vast enough to expand the soul of the proselyte to a full sense of her own dignity; and practical enough to provide incessant occupation for his time and thoughts; and must have enough of difficulty to bring his powers into strenuous activity, and of danger to teach the lesson of mutual dependence; and there must be conflicts for the brave, and intrigues for the subtle, and solitary labours for the studious, and offices of mercy for the compassionate; and to all must be offered rewards, both temporal and eternal —in this life, the reward of a sympathy rendered intense by confinement, and stimulating by secrecy; and in the life to come, felicities of which the anxious heart might find the assurance in the promises and in the fellowship of the holy and the wise—of men whose claims to the divine favour it would be folly and impiety to doubt.

If there be in any of our universities a professor of moral philosophy lecturing on the science of human nature, let him study the constitutions of Ignatius Loyola. They were the fruit of the solitary meditations of many years. The lamp of the retired student threw its rays on nothing but his manuscript, his crucifix, Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*, and the New Testament. Any other presence would have been a profane intrusion; for the work was but a transcript of thoughts imparted to his disembodied spirit when, in early manhood, it had been caught up into the seventh heavens. As he wrote, a lambent flame, in shape like a tongue of fire, hovered about his head; and as may be read in his own hand, in a still extant paper, the hours of composition were past in tears of devotion, in holy ardour, in raptures, and amidst celestial apparitions.

Some unconscious love of power, a mind bewildered by many gross superstitions, and theoretical errors, and perhaps some tinge of insanity, may be ascribed to Ignatius Loyola; but no dispassionate reader of his writings, or of his life, will question his integrity; or deny him the praise of a devotion at once sincere, habitual, and profound. It is not to the glory of the reformers to depreciate the name of their greatest antagonist; or to think meanly of him to whom more than any other man it is owing that the Reformation was stayed, and the Church of Rome rescued from her impending doom.

In the language now current amongst us, Ignatius might be described as the leader of the conservative against the innovating spirit of his times. It was an age, as indeed is every era of great popular revolutions, when the impulsive or centrifugal forces which tend to isolate man, preponderating over the attractive or centripetal forces which tend to congregate him, had destroyed the balance of the social system. From amidst the controversies which then agitated the world had emerged two great truths, of which, after three hundred years' debate, we are yet to find the reconcilement. It was true that the Christian commonwealth should be one consentient body, united under one supreme head, and bound together by a community of law, of doctrine, and of worship. It was also true that each member of that body must, for himself, on his own responsibility, and at his own peril, render that worship, ascertain that doctrine, study that law, and seek the guidance of that Supreme Ruler. Between these corporate duties, and these individual obligations, there was a seeming contrariety. And yet it must be apparent only, and not real; for all truths must be consistent with each other. Here was a problem for the learned and the wise, for schools, and presses, and pulpits. But it is not by sages, nor in the spirit of philosophy, that such problems receive their practical solution. Wisdom may be the ultimate arbiter, but is seldom the immediate agent in human affairs. It is by antagonist passions, prejudices, and follies, that the equipoise of this most belligerent planet of ours is chiefly preserved; and so it was in the sixteenth century. If papal Rome had her Brennus, she must also have her Camillus. From the camp of the invaders arose the war-cry of absolute mental independence; from the beleaguered host, the watchword of absolute spiritual obedience. The German pointed the way to that sacred solitude where, besides the worshipper himself, none may enter; the Spaniard to that innumerable company which, with one accord, still chant the liturgies of remotest generations. Chieftains in the most momentous warfare of which this earth had been the theatre since the subversion of paganism, each was a rival worthy of the other in capacity, courage, disinterestedness, and the love of truth, and yet how marvellous the contrast!

Luther took to wife a nun. For thirty years together, Loyola never once looked on the female countenance. To overthrow the houses of the order to which he belonged, was the triumph of the reformer To establish a new order on indestructible foundations, the glory of the saint. The career of the one was opened in the cell, and concluded amidst the cares of secular government. The course of life of the other, led him from a youth of camps and palaces to an old age of religious abstraction. Demons haunted both; but to the northern visionary they appeared as foul or malignant fiends, with whom he was to agonize in spiritual strife; to the southern dreamer, as angels of light marshalling his way to celestial blessedness. As best became his Teutonic honesty and singleness of heart, Luther aimed at no perfection but such as may consist with the every day cares, and the common duties, and the innocent delights of our social existence; at once the foremost of heroes, and a very man; now oppressed with melancholy, and defying the powers of darkness, satanic or human; then "rejoicing in gladness and thankfulness of heart for all his abundance;" loving and beloved; communing with the wife of his bosom, prattling with his children; surrendering his overburdened mind to the charms of music, awake to every gentle voice, and to each cheerful aspect of nature or of art; responding alike to every divine impulse and to every human feeling; no chord unstrung in his spiritual or sensitive frame, but all blending together in harmonies as copious as the bounties of Providence, and as changeful as the vicissitudes of life. How remote from the "perfection" which Loyola proposed to himself, and which (unless we presume to distrust the bulls by which he was beatified and canonized) we must have supposed him to attained. Drawn by infallible, not less distinctly than by fallible limners, the portrait of the military priest of the Casa Professa, possesses the cold dignity, and the grace of sculpture; but is wholly wanting in the mellow tones, the lights and shadows, the rich colouring and the skilful composition of the sister art. There he stands apart from us mortal men, familiar with visions which he may not communicate, and with joys which he cannot impart. Severe in the midst of raptures, composed in the very agonies of pain; a silent, austere, and solitary man; with a heart formed for tenderness, yet mortifying even his best affections; loving mankind as his brethren, and yet rejecting their sympathy; one while a squalid, careworn, self-lacerated pauper, tormenting himself that so he might rescue others from sensuality; and then, a monarch reigning in secluded majesty, that so he might become the benefactor of his race, or a legislator, exacting, though with no selfish purposes, an obedience as submissive and as prompt as is due to the King of Kings.

Heart and soul we are for the Protestant: He who will be wiser than his Maker is but seeming wise. He who will deaden one-half of his nature to invigorate the other half, will become at best a distorted prodigy. Dark as are the pages, and mystic the character in which the truth is inscribed, he who can decipher the roll will read there, that self-adoring pride is the head-string of stoicism, whether heathen or Christian. But there is a roll neither dark nor mystic, in which the simplest and the most ignorant may learn in what the "perfection" of our humanity really consists. Throughout the glorious profusion of didactic precepts, of pregnant apophthegms, of lyric and choral songs, of institutes ecclesiastical and civil, of historical legends and biographies, of homilies and apologues, of prophetic menaces, of epistolary admonitions, and of positive laws, which crowd the inspired canon, there is still one consentient voice proclaiming to man, that the world within and the world without him were created for each other; that his interior life must be sustained and nourished by intercourse with external things; and that he then most nearly approaches to the perfection of his nature, when most conversant with the joys and sorrows of life, and most affected by them, he is yet the best prepared to renounce the one or to endure the other, in cheerful submission to the will of Heaven.

Unalluring, and on the whole unlovely as it is, the image of Loyola must ever command the homage of the world. No other uninspired man, unaided by military or civil power, and making no appeal to the passions of the multitude, has had the genius to conceive, the courage to attempt, and the success to establish, a polity teeming with results at once so momentous and so distinctly foreseen. Amidst his ascetic follies, and his half crazy visions, and despite all the coarse daubing with which the miracle-mongers of his church have defaced it, his character is destitute neither of sublimity nor of grace. They were men of no common stamp with whom he lived, and they regarded him with an unbounded reverence. On the anniversary of his death Baronius and Bellarmine met to worship at his tomb; and there, with touching and unpremeditated eloquence, joined to celebrate his virtues. His *successor Laynex* was so well convinced that Loyola was beloved by the Deity above all other men, as to declare it impossible that any request of his should be refused. Xavier was wont to kneel when he wrote letters to him; to implore the divine aid through the merits of his "holy father Ignatius," and to carry about his autograph as a sacred relic. In popular estimation, the very house in which he once dwelt had been so hallowed by his presence, as to shake to the foundation if thoughts unbecoming its purity found entrance into the mind of any inmate. Of his theopathy, as exhibited in his letters, in his recorded discourse, and in his "Spiritual Exercises," it is perhaps difficult for the colder imaginations and the Protestant reserve of the north to form a correct estimate. Measured by such a standard, it must be pronounced irreverent and erotic;—a libation on the altar at once too profuse and too little filtered from the dross of human passion. But to his fellow men he was not merely benevolent, but compassionate, tolerant, and candid. However inflexible in exacting from his chosen followers an all-enduring constancy, he was gentle to others, especially to the young and the weak; and would often make an amiable though awkward effort to promote their recreation. He was never heard to mention a fault or a crime, except to suggest an apology for the offender. "Humbly to conceal humility, and to shun the praise of being humble," was the maxim and the habit of his later life; and on that principle he maintained the unostentatious decencies of his rank as general of his order at the Casa Professa; a convent which had been assigned at Rome for their residence. There he dwelt, conducting a correspondence more extensive and important than any which issued from the cabinets of Paris or Madrid. In sixteen years he had established twelve Jesuit provinces in Europe, India, Africa, and Brazil; and more than a hundred colleges or houses for the professed and the probationers, already amounting to many thousands. His missionaries had traversed every country, the most remote and barbarous, which the enterprise of his age had opened to the merchants of the west. The devout resorted to him for guidance, the miserable for relief, the wise for instruction, and the rulers of the earth for succour. Men felt that there had appeared among them one of those monarchs who reign in right of their own native supremacy; and to whom the feebler wills of others must yield either a ready or a reluctant allegiance. It was a conviction recorded by his disciples on his tomb, in these memorable and significant words: "Whoever thou mayest be who hast portrayed to thine own imagination Pompey, or Cæsar, or Alexander, open thine eyes to the truth, and let this marble teach thee how much greater a conqueror than they was Ignatius."

Whatever may have been the comparative majesty of the Cæsarian and the Ignatian conquests, it was true of either, that on the death of the conqueror the succession to his diadem hung long in anxious suspense. Our tale descends from the sublime and the heroic to the region of ordinary motives and ordinary men. According to the constitution of the order, the choice of the general was to be made in a chapter, of which the fully professed, and they alone, were members. Of that body Jago Laynez was the eldest and most eminent, and from his dying bed (so at least it was supposed) he summoned his brethren to hold the election at the Casa Professa. The citation was unanswered. A majority of the whole electoral college were detained in Spain by Philip II., who was then engaged in his war with the papal court; and in this extremity Laynez was nominated in the provincial office of vicar-general. That promotion is a specific in some forms of bodily disease, is as certain as any apophthegm in Galen. Full of renovated life, the vicar-general at once assumed all the powers of his great predecessor, and gave prompt evidence that they had fallen into no feeble hands. But neither was that a feeble grasp in which the keys of St. Peter were held. Hot-headed and imperious as he was, Paul IV. had quailed in the solemn presence of Loyola; but now, as he believed, had found the time for arresting the advance of a power which he had learned to regard with jealousy. He began (as an Englishman might express it) by putting the vacant generalship into commission, and assigned to Laynez nothing more than a share in that divided rule. A voyage to Spain, where in his own country and among his own friends his election would be secure, was the next resource of the vicar-general; but a papal mandate appeared, forbidding any Jesuit to quit the precincts of Rome. Thus thwarted, Laynez resolved on immediately elevating into the class of the professed as many of his associates as would form a college numerous enough for the choice of a head; but the vigilant old pontiff detected and prohibited the design. Foiled in every manœuvre, nothing remained to the aspiring vicar but to await the return of peace. It came at length, and with it came from Spain the electors so long and anxiously expected.

Lowly was the chamber in which they were convened; nor did there meet that day within the compass of the seven hills a company, in outward semblance, less imposing; and yet, scarcely had the assembled Comitia, to whose shouts those hills had once re-echoed, ever conferred on prætor or proconsul a power more real or more extensive than that which those homely men were now about to bestow. But Laynez seemed doomed to yet another disappointment. The chapel doors were thrown open, and the Cardinal Pacheco appearing among them, interdicted, in the name of the pope, all farther proceedings, unless they would consent to choose their general for three years only; and would engage, like other religious men, daily to chant the appointed offices of the church. What are the limits of unlimited obedience? When, a century and a half ago, our own casuists laboured for an answer to that knotty problem, they were but unconscious imitators of Jago Laynez and his companions. Maugre vows, and pope, and cardinal, they forthwith elected him general for life; nor was one litany the more sung by the Jesuits for all the papal bidding.

Yet, the formal decencies of the scene, how well were they maintained? Joyful thanksgivings on the side of the electors; an aspect eloquent with reluctance, grief, and the painful sense of responsibility on the part of the new general. Is it incredible that some motives nobler and more pure than those of mere secular ambition may have animated Laynez on this occasion? Probably not; for there are few of us in whom antagonist principles do not obtain this kind of divided triumph; and the testimonies to his virtues are such and so many as almost to command assent to their substantial truth. Of the twenty-four books of the history of Orlandinus, eight are devoted to his administration of the affairs of the order. They extort a willing acknowledgment, that he possessed extraordinary abilities; and a half-reluctant admission, that he may have combined with them a more than common degree of genuine piety.

Laynez would seem to have been born to supply the intellectual deficiencies of Ignatius. He was familiar with the whole compass of the theological literature of his age, and with all the moral sciences which a theologian was then required to cultivate. With these stores of knowledge he had made himself necessary to the first general. Loyola consulted, employed, and trusted, but apparently did not like him. It is stated by Orlandinus, that there was no other of his eminent followers whom the great patriarch of the society treated with such habitual rigour, and yet none who rendered him such important services. "Do you not think," said Ignatius to him, "that in framing their constitutions, the founders of the religious orders were inspired?" "I do," was the answer, "so far as the general scheme and outline were concerned." The inspired saint, therefore, took for his province the compilation of the text, the uninspired scholar, the preparation of the authoritative comment. For himself, the lawgiver claimed the praise of having raised an edifice, of which the plan and the arrangement were divine. To his fellow-labourer he assigned the merit of having supported it by the solid foundation of a learning, which, however excellent, was yet entirely human. An example will best explain this division of labour.

"In theologiâ legetur Vetus et Novum Testamentum, et doctrina scholastica Divi Thomæ" —is the text. "Prælegetur etiam magister sententiarum; sed si videatur temporis decursu, alius autor studentibus utilior futurus, ut si aliqua summa, vel liber theologiæ scholasticæ, conficeretur, qui nostris temporibus accommodatior videretur"—"prælegi poterit"—is the comment. Ignatius was content that the divine Thomas should be installed among the Jesuits as the permanent interpreter of the sacred oracles. Laynez, with deeper foresight, perceived that the time was coming when they must discover a teacher "better suited to times." It was a prediction fulfilled shortly after his death, in the person of Molina, who was himself the pupil of the second general of the order.

To Laynez belongs the praise or the reproach of having revived, in modern times, the Molinist or Arminian doctrine. Our latest posterity will debate, as our remotest ancestry have debated, the soundness of that creed; but that it was "temporibus accommodatior," few will be inclined to dispute. The times evidently required that the great antagonists of Protestantism should inculcate a belief more comprehensive, and more flexible, than that of Augustine or of St. Thomas. And if to the adoption of those opinions may be traced much of the danger and disrepute to which the society was afterwards exposed, to the same cause may be ascribed much of the secret of their vitality and their strength.

The doctrines of Molina were hazarded by Laynez, even in the bosom of the council of Trent; where, though not constitutionally brave, he dared the reproach of heresy and Pelagianism. But, in the noblest theatre for the display of eloquence which the world had seen since the fall of the Roman commonwealth, he exhibited all the hardihood which a conscious superiority in the power of speech will impart to the least courageous. Amidst cries of indignation, he maintained the freedom of the will, and the ultramontane doctrines, the most unwelcome to his audience; and vehemently opposed to the demand of more than half of Europe for the admission of the laity to the cup. He felt that resentment must give way to those feelings on which a great speaker seldom relies in vain. He spoke from a position best befitting an ostentatious humility, and therefore the most remote from the thrones of the papal legates, and the ambassadors of Christendom. Even those thrones were for a moment abandoned. Cardinals, bishops, counts, and abbotts, thronged around his chair; generals and doctors obeyed the same impulse; and for two successive hours a circle more illustrious for rank and learning than ever before surrounded the tribune of an orator, rewarded his efforts by their profound and silent admiration. He spoke at Paris, and he preached at Rome, with a similar applause; and yet, on examining the only two of his speeches which have been preserved by Orlandinus, it is difficult to detect the charm which once seduced the haughtiest prelate into a passing forgetfulness of their dignity. The eloquence of Laynez would appear to have been neither impassioned nor imaginative, nor of that intense earnestness which seems to despise the very rules by the observance of which it triumphs. Luminous argumentation, clothed in transparent language, and delivered with facility and grace, was probably the praise to which he was entitled—no vulgar praise indeed; for, amidst the triumphs of oratory, few are greater or more welcome than that of infusing order, without fatigue, into the chaotic thoughts of an inquisitive audience.

Ambition clothed in rags, subtlety under the guise of candour, are the offences which the enemies of his order have ascribed to Laynez. But a man who, in the sixteenth century, refused a cardinal's hat, (his refusal of the papacy is a more apocryphal story,) can hardly have been the victim of a low desire for worldly honours; and hypocrisy is a charge which every one must bear who has to do with opponents incredulous of virtue superior *to their own*. For eighteen years the head of a body distrusted and unpopular from its infancy, he had neither hereditary rank to avert the envy which waits on greatness, nor the lofty daring to which the world is ever prompt to yield idolatrous homage. In his hands the weapons of Ignatius or of Xavier would have been impotent; but he wielded his own with address and with admirable effect. To him his society were first indebted for their characteristic doctrine, for the possession and the fame of learning, for many enlargements of their privileges, for a more intimate alliance with the papacy, and the more pronounced hostility of the reformers. He first established for them that authority in the cabinets of Europe, on which, at no distant time, the edifice of their temporal power was to rest; and it was his melancholy distinction to number among his disciples the infamous Catherine of Medici, and her less odious, because feebler, son. He was associated with them at the very time when they were revolving the greatest crime with which the annals of Christendom have been polluted. With the guilt of that massacre his memory is, however, unstained; except so far as the doctrines he inculcated, in his debates at Paris with Beza and Peter Martyr, may have taught the sovereigns to think lightly of any bloodshed which should rid the world of a party abhorred of God, and hateful to the enlightened eye of man.

Gifted with extraordinary talents, profound learning, flexible address, and captivating eloquence, Laynez fell short of that standard at which, alone, men may inscribe their names in the roll sacred to those who have reigned over their fellow mortals by right divine, because a right inherent and indefeasible. Without the genius to devise, or the glowing passion to achieve, great things, none may be associated with those kings of the earth on whose brows nature herself has set the diadem. Far surpassing in mere intellectual resources both Xavier and Ignatius, the fiery element native to their souls was uninhabitable to his. Laynez was the first, if not the most eminent, example of the results of Loyola's discipline; and illustrates the effect of concentrating all the interests of life, and all the affections of the heart, within the narrow circle of one contracted fellowship. It yielded in him, as it has often produced in others, a vigorous but a stunted development of character; a kind of social selfishness and sectional virtue; a subordination of philanthropy to the love of caste; a spirit irreclaimably servile, because exulting in its own servitude; a temper consistent, indeed, with great actions and often contributing to them, but destructive (at least in ordinary minds) of that free and cordial sympathy with man as man;—of those careless graces, and of that majestic repose, which touch and captivate the heart, and to which must, in part at least, be ascribed the sacred fascination exercised over us all by the simple records of the life of Him whose name the society of Jesus had assumed.

On the 2d of July, 1565, the Casa Professa, usually the scene of a profound stillness, was agitated by an unwonted excitement. Men of austere demeanour might be seen there clasping each other's hands, and voices habitually mute were interchanging hearty congratulations. One alone appeared to take no share in the common joy. As if overpowered by some strange and unwelcome tidings, he seemed by imploring gestures to deprecate a decision against which his paralyzed lips in vain attempted to protest. His age might be nearly fifty, his dress mean and sordid, and toil or suffering had ploughed their furrows in his pallid cheek; but he balanced his tall and still graceful figure with a soldier's freedom, and gazed on his associates with a countenance cast in that mould which ladies love and artists emulate. They called him Father Francis; and on the death of Laynez their almost unanimous suffrage had just hailed him as the third general of the order of Jesus. The wish for rank and power was never more sincerely disclaimed, for never had they been forced on any one who had a larger experience of their vanity.

In the female line Father Francis was the grandson of Ferdinand of Arragon, and therefore the near kinsman of the Emperor Charles V. Among his paternal ancestry he could boast or lament the names of Alexander VI. and of Cæsar Borgia. Of that house, eminent alike for their wealth, their honours, and their crimes, he was the lineal representative; and had, in early manhood, inherited from his father the patrimony and the title of the Dukes of Gandia.

Don Francis Borgia, as if to rescue the name he bore from the infamy of his progenitors, exhaled, even in his childish days, the odour of sanctity. With each returning month, he cast a lot to determine which he should personate of the saints with whose names it was studded on the calendar. In his tenth year, with a virtue unsung and unconceived by the *Musæ Etonienses*, he played at saints so perfectly as to inflict a vigorous chastisement on his own naked person. It is hard to resist the wish that the scourge had been more resolutely wielded by the arm of his tutor. So seems to have thought his maternal uncle Don John of Arragon, archbishop of Saragossa. Taking the charge of his nephew, that high-born prelate compelled him to study alternately the lessons of the riding-master and those of the master of the sentences; and in his nineteenth year sent him to complete his education at the court of his imperial cousin.

Ardent as were still the aspirations of the young courtier for the monastic life, no one in that gallant circle bore himself more bravely in the *menage*, or sheathed his sword with a steadier hand in the throat of the half-maddened bull, or more skilfully disputed with his sovereign the honours of the tournament. As the youthful knight, bowing to the saddle-tree, lowered his spear before the "Queen of Beauty," many a full dark eye beamed with a deeper lustre; but his triumph was incomplete and worthless unless it won the approving smile of Eleonora de Castro. That smile was not often refused. But the romance of Don Francis begins where other romances terminate. Foremost in the train of Charles and Isabella, the husband of the fair Eleonora still touched his lute with unrivalled skill in the halls of the escurial, or followed the quarry across the plains of Castile in advance of the most ardent falconer. Yet that music was universally selected from the offices of the church; and in the very agony of the chase, just as the wheeling hawk paused for his last deadly plunge, (genius of Nimrod, listen!) he would avert his eyes and ride slowly home, the inventor of a matchless effort of penitential self-denial.

With Charles himself for his fellow pupil, Don Francis studied the arts of war and fortification under the once celebrated Sainte Croix, and practised in Africa the lessons he had been taught;—earning the double praise, that in the camp he was the most magnificent, in the field the most adventurous, of all the leaders in that vaunted expedition. At the head of a troop enlisted and maintained by himself, he attended the emperor to the Milanese and Provence; and, in honourable acknowledgment of his services, was selected by Charles to lay a report of the campaign before the empress in person, at Segovia. Towards her he felt an almost filial regard. She had long been the zealous patron and the cordial friend of himself and of Eleonora; and at the public festivals which celebrated the victories of Charles, and the meeting of the states of Castile at Toledo, they shone among the most brilliant of the satellites by which her throne was encircled.

At the moment of triumph the inexorable arm was unbared which so often, as in mockery of human pomp, confounds together the world's bravest pageants and the humiliations of the grave. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes, but, when the imperial fall, not without one last poor assertion of their departed dignity. Isabella might not be laid in the sepulchre of the kings of Spain, until amidst the funeral rites the soldered coffin had been opened, the cerements removed, and some grandee of the highest rank had been enabled to depose, that he had seen within them the very body of the deceased sovereign. Such, in pursuance of an ancient custom, was the duty confided to the zeal of Don Francis Borgia, nor was any other better fitted for such a trust. The eye, now for ever closed, had never turned to him but with maternal kindness, and every lineament of that serene and once eloquent countenance was indelibly engraven on his memory. Amidst the half-uttered prayers which commended her soul to the Divine mercy, and the low dirge of the organ, he advanced with streaming eyes, and reverently raised the covering which concealed the secrets of the grave, when—but why or how portray the appalling and loathsome spectacle? That gentle brow, that eloquent countenance, that form so lately raised on earth's proudest throne, and extolled with an almost adoring homage! Don Francis turned from the sight to shudder and to pray.

It was the great epoch in the life of Borgia. In the eyes of the world, indeed, he may have been unchanged: but in his eyes the whole aspect of that world was altered. Lord of a princely fortune, the heir of an illustrious house, the favourite kinsman of the emperor of the West, renowned in the very flower of his youth as a warrior, a courtier, and a musician, his home hallowed by conjugal love, and gladdened by the sports of his children; for whom had life a deeper interest, or who could erect on a surer basis a loftier fabric of more brilliant hopes? Those interests and hopes he deliberately resigned, and, at the age of twenty-nine, bound himself by a solemn vow, that in the event of his surviving Eleonora, he would end his days as a member of some religious order. He had gazed on the hideous triumph of death and sin over prospects still more splendid than his own. For him the soothing illusions of existence were no more—earth and its inhabitants, withering under the curse of their Maker, might put on their empty gauds, and for some transient hour dream and talk of happiness. But the curse was there, and there would it lie, crushing the frivolous spirit the most when felt the least, and consigning alike to that foul debasement the lovely and the brave; the sylph now floating through the giddy dance, and the warrow now proudly treading the field of victory.

From such meditations Charles endeavoured to recall his friend to the common duties of life. He required him to assume the vice royalty of Catalonia, and adorned him with the cross of the order of Alcantara, then of all chivalric honours the noblest and the most highly prized. His administration was firm, munificent, and just; it forms the highest era of his life, and is especially signalized by the same sedulous care for the education of the young, which afterwards formed his highest praise as general of the order of Jesus.

Ingenious above all men in mortifying his natural affections, Don Francis could not neglect the occasion which his new dignities afforded him, of incurring much wholesome contumely. Sumptuous banquets must be given in honour of his sovereign, when he could at once fast and be despised for fasting. To exhibit himself in penitential abasement before the people under his authority, would give to penitence the appropriate accompaniment of general contempt. On the festival of "the Invention of the Holy Cross," mysteries not unlike those of the *Bona Dea* were to be celebrated by the ladies of Barcelona, when, to prevent the profane intrusion of any of the coarser sex, the viceroy himself undertook the office of sentinel. With a naked dagger in his hand, a young nobleman demanded entrance, addressing to the viceroy insults such as every gentleman is bound, under the heaviest penalty of the laws of chivalry, to expiate by blood. A braver man did not tread the soil of Spain than Don Francis, nor any one to whom the reproach of paltroonery was more hateful. And yet his sword did not leap from his scabbard. With a calm rebuke, and courteous demeanour, he allowed the bravo to enter the sacred precincts preferring the imputation of cowardice, though stinging like an adder, to the sin of avenging himself, and, indeed, to the duty of maintaining his lawful authority. History has omitted to tell what were the weapons, or what the *incantation, by* which the ladies promptly ejected the insolent intruder, nor has she recorded how they afterwards received their guardian knight of Alcantara. Her only care has been to excite our admiration for this most illustrious victory in the bosom of Don Francis, of the meekness of the saint over the human passions of the soldier.

At the end of four years Don Francis was relieved by the death of his father from his viceregal office, and assumed his hereditary title of Duke of Gandia. His vassals exulted in the munificence of their new chief. The ancient retainers of his family lived on his bounty—cottages, convents, and hospitals, rose on his estates—fortresses were built to check the ravages of the Morish corsairs, and the mansion of his ancestors reappeared in all its ancient splendour. In every work of piety and mercy the wise and gentle Eleonora was the rival of her lord. But it was the only strife which ever agitated the castle of Gandia. Austerities were practised there, but gloom and lassitude were unknown; nor did the bright suns of Spain gild any feudal ramparts, within which love, and peace the child of love, shed their milder light with a more abiding radiance.

But on that countenance, hitherto so calm and so submissive, might at length be traced the movements of an inward tempest, with which, even when prostrate before the altar, the Duke of Gandia strove in vain. Conversant with every form of self-inflicted suffering, how should he find strength to endure the impending death of Eleonora! His was a prayer transcending the resources of language and of thought; it was the mute agony of a breaking heart. But after the whirlwind and the fire, was heard the still small voice. It said, or seemed to say, "If it be thy will, she shall recover; but not for her real welfare nor for thine." Adoring gratitude swept away every feebler emotion, and the suppliant's grief at length found utterance. "Thy will be done. Thou knowest what is best for me. Whom have we in heaven but thee, and whom upon earth shall we desire in comparison of thee?" At the age of thirty-six the Duke of Gandia committed to the tomb the frame once animated by a spirit from which not death itself could separate him. In the sacred retirement to which in that event he had devoted his remaining days, Eleonora would still unite her prayers to his; and as each of those days should decline into the welcome shadows of evening, one stage the more towards his reunion with her would have been traversed.

The castle of Gandia was still hung with the funeral draperies when a welcome though unexpected guest arrived there. It was Peter Faber, the officiating priest at the crypt of Montmartre, charged by Ignatius with a mission to promote the cause of Christian education in Spain. Aided by his counsels, and by the letters of the patriarch, the duke erected on his estates a church, a college, and a library, and placed them under the care of teachers selected by Ignatius. The sorrows of the duke were relieved as his wealth flowed still more copiously in this new channel of beneficence; and the universities of Alcala and Seville were enlarged by his bounty with similar foundations. But, as Faber remarked, a still nobler edifice was yet to be erected on the soul of the founder itself. The first stone of it was laid in the duke's performance of the Spiritual Exercises. To the completion of this invisible but imperishable building, the remainder of his life was inflexibly devoted.

With Ignatius the duke had long maintained a correspondence, in which the stately courtesies of Spanish noblemen not ungracefully temper the severe tones of patriarchal authority and filial reverence. Admission into the order of Jesus was an honour for which, in this case, the aspirant was humbly content, and was wisely permitted long to wait and sue. To study the biography, that he might imitate the life of Him by whose holy name the society was called; to preach in his own household, or at the wicket of the nunnery of the ladies of St. Clair; and day by day, to place in humiliating contrast some proof of the divine goodness, and some proof of his own demerit, were the first probationary steps which the duke was required to tread in the toilsome path on which he had thus entered. It was a path from which Philip, then governing Spain with the title of regent, would have willingly seduced him. He consulted him on the most critical affairs; summoned him to take a high station in the states of Castile; and pressed on his acceptance the office of grand master of the royal household. It was declined in favour of the Duke of Alva. Had Gandia preferred the duties of his secular rank to those of his religious aspirations, Spain might have had a saint the less and seven provinces the more. With the elevation of Alva, the butcheries in the Netherlands, the disgrace of Spain, and the independence of Holland might have been averted.

Warned by his escape, the duke implored with renewed earnestness his immediate admission into the order; nor was Ignatius willing that his proselyte should again incur such dangers. At the chapel of his own college he accordingly pronounced the irrevocable vows; a papal bull having dispensed during a term of four years with any public avowal of the change. They were passed in the final adjustment of his secular affairs. He had lived in the splendour appropriate to his rank and fortune, and in the exercise of the bounty becoming his eminence in the Christian commonwealth. But now all was to be abandoned, even the means of almsgiving, for he was himself henceforth to live on the alms of others. He gave his children in marriage to the noblest houses in Spain and Portugal, transferred to his eldest son the enjoyment of the patrimonial estates of Gandia, and then, at the age of forty, meekly betook himself to the study of scholastic divinity, of the traditions of the church, and of the canons of the general councils. He even submitted to all the rules, and performed all the public exercises enforced on the youngest student. Such was his piety that the thorny fagots of the schoolmen fed instead of smothering the flame; and on the margin of his Thomas Aquinas might be seen some devout aspiration, extracted by his sacred alchemy from each subtle distinction in the text. Never before or since was the degree of doctor in divinity, to which he now proceeded, so hardly earned or so well deserved.

Two of the brothers of the duke had been members of the sacred college, and his humility had refused the purple offered at the instance of the emperor to two of his sons. But how should the new doctor avert from his own head the ecclesiastical cap of maintenance with which Charles was now desirous to replace the ducal coronet? He fled the presence of his imperial patron; made and executed his own testamentary dispositions, delivered his last parental charge to his eldest son, and bade a final adieu to his weeping family. The gates of the castle of Gandia closed on their self-banished lord. He went forth, like Francis Xavier, chanting the song of David—"When Israel went out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from a strange people,"—adding from another strain of the royal minstrel, "Our bonds are broken and we are delivered." He lived for more than twenty years from this time, and in his future missions into Spain often passed the gates of the castle, but never more re-entered them. He became a stranger even to his children, never again passing so much as a single day in their society, or even permitting himself to become acquainted with their offspring.

As the bird set free to her nest, so hasted the emancipated duke to take his seat at the footstool of Ignatius. Yet in his route through Ferrara and Florence, his sacred impatience was arrested, and his humility confirmed, by the unwelcome honours yielded to him by his kinsmen, the reigning sovereigns of those duchies. He would have entered Rome by night; but in the city of triumphs and ovations, the victorious Loyola must exhibit so illustrious a captive. Attended by the ambassador of Spain, by a prince of the house of Colonna, and by a long train of cardinals, priests, and nobles, the duke of Gandia advanced in solemn procession to the Casa Professa. There, in the presence of his general, his wearied spirit found at length the repose which the most profuse liberality of fortune had been unable to bestow. With tears of joy he kissed the feet of the patriarch and of his professed brethren, esteeming the meanest office in their household an honour too exalted for so unworthy an associate; and then, in a general confession, poured into the ear of Ignatius every secret of his conscience from the dawn of life to that long desired hour.

Such zeal was a treasure too precious to be left without some great and definite object; and as the duke was still the steward of some of this world's treasure, which he had devoted to sacred uses, they were employed in building at Rome the church and college afterwards so famous as the college *de Propaganda Fide.* Only one secular care still awaited him. His rank as a grandee of Spain, and the cross of Alcantara, could not be laid aside without the consent of the emperor. It was solicited with all the grace of an accomplished courtier, and all the fervour of a saint. But while he awaited at Rome the answer of Charles, a new alarm disturbed the serenity of the Casa Professa. The dreaded purple was again pressed on him with all the weight of papal admonition. To avoid it, Gandia fled the presence of the pope, and Ignatius returned to Spain, performed a pilgrimage to the castle of Loyola, kissed the hallowed ground, and then burying himself in a Jesuit college at Ognato, once more awaited the decision of the emperor. It soon arrived. He was no longer a duke, a knight of St. Iago, nor even a Spanish gentleman. Solemnly, and in due legal form, he renounced all these titles, and with them all his property and territorial rights. Even his secular dress was laid aside, and his head was prepared by the tonsure for the Episcopal touch, emblematic of the most awful mystery. The astonished spectators collected and preserved the holy relics. And now bent in lowly prostration before the altar at Ognato, the Father Francis had no farther sacrifice to offer there, but the sacrifice of a heart emptied of all the interests and of all the affections of the world. Long and silent was his prayer, but it was now unattended with any trace of disorder. The tears he shed were such as might have bedewed the cheek of the first man before he had tasted the bitterness of sin. He rose from his knees, bade a last farewell to his attendants; and Father Francis was left alone with his Creator.

It was a solitude not long to be maintained. The fame of his devotion filled the Peninsula. All who needed spiritual counsel, and who wished to indulge an idle curiosity, resorted to his cell. Kings sought his advice, wondering congregations hung on his lips, and two at least of the grandees of Spain imitated his example. His spiritual triumphs were daily more and more splendid; and, if he might escape the still threatened promotion into the college of cardinals, might be as enduring as his life. The authority of Ignatius, not unaided by some equivocal exercise of his ingenuity, at length placed Father Francis beyond the reach of this last danger. They both went down to the grave without witnessing the debasement of their order by any ecclesiastical dignity.

But there was yet one tie to the pomp and vanity of this world, which could not be entirely broken. During his viceregal administration, Father Francis had on one occasion traversed the halls of the castle of Barcelona in deep and secret conference with his imperial cousin. Each at that interview imparted to the other his design of devoting to religious retirement the interval which should intervene between the business and the close of life. At every season of disappointment Charles reverted to this purpose, and abandoned or postponed it with each return of success. But now, broken with sickness and sorrow, he had fixed his residence in a monastery in Estremadura, and summoned the former viceroy of Catalonia to the presence of his early friend and patron. Falling on his knees, as in times of yore, Father Francis offered to impress the kiss of homage on the hand which had so lately borne the sceptre of half the civilized world. But Charles embraced his cousin, and *compelled him to sit*, and to sit covered, by his side. Long and frequent were their conversations; but the record of them transmitted to us by the historians of the Order of Jesus, has but little semblance of authenticity. Charles assails, and Borgia defends the new Institute, and the imperial disputant of course yields to the combined force of eloquence and truth. It seems less improbable that the publication of Memoirs of the life of the Emperor, to be written by himself, was one subject of serious debate at these interviews, and that the good father dissuaded it. If the tale be true, he has certainly one claim the less to the gratitude of later times. What seems certain is, that he undertook and executed some secret mission from Charles to the court of Portugal, that he acted as one of the executors of his will, and delivered a funeral oration in praise of the deceased emperor before the Spanish court at Valladolid.

From this point, the life of Borgia merges in the general history of the order to which he had attached himself. It is a passage of history full of the miracles of self-denial, and of miracles in the more accurate acceptation of the word. To advance the cause of education, and to place in the hands of his own society the control of that mighty engine, was the labour which Father Francis as their general chiefly proposed to himself. His success was complete, and he lived to see the establishment, in almost every state of Europe, of colleges formed on the model of that which he had himself formed in the town of Gandia.

Borgia is celebrated by his admirers as the most illustrious of all conquerors of the appetites and passions of our common nature; and the praise, such as it is, may well be conceded to him. No other saint in the calendar ever abdicated or declined so great an amount of worldly grandeur and domestic happiness. No other embraced poverty and pain in forms more squalid, or more revolting to flesh and blood. So strange and shocking are the stories of his flagellations, of the diseases contracted by them, and of the sickening practices by which he tormented his senses, that even to read them is of itself no light penance. In the same spirit, our applause is demanded for feats of humility, and prodigies of obedience, and raptures of devotion, so extravagant, that his biographers might seem to have assumed the office of penitential executors to the saint; and to challenge for his memory some of the disgust and contempt which when living he so studiously courted. And yet Borgia was no ordinary man.

He had great talents with a narrow capacity. Under the control of minds more comprehensive than his own, he could adopt and execute their wider views with admirable address and vigour. With rare powers both of endurance and of action, he was the prey of a constitutional melancholy, which made him dependent on the more sanguine spirit of his guides for all his aims and for all his hopes; but once rescued from the agony of selecting his path, he moved along it not merely with firmness but with impetuosity. All his impulses came from without; but when once given they could not readily be arrested. The very dejection and self-distrust of his nature rendered him more liable than other men to impressions at once deep and abiding. Thus he was a saint in his infancy at the bidding of his nurse—then a cavalier at the command of his uncle—an inamorato because the empress desired it—a warrior and a viceroy because such was the pleasure of Charles—a devotee from seeing a corpse in a state of decomposition—a founder of colleges on the advice of Peter Faber—a Jesuit at the will of Ignatius—and general of the order because his colleagues would have it so. Yet each of these characters, when once assumed, was performed, not merely with constancy, but with high and just applause. His mind was like a sycophant plant, feeble when alone, but of admirable vigour and luxuriance when properly sustained. A whole creation of such men would have been unequal to the work of Ignatius Loyola; but, in his grasp, one such man could perform a splendid though but a secondary service. His life was more eloquent than all the homilies of Chrysostom. Descending from one of the most brilliant heights of human prosperity, he exhibited every where, and in an aspect the most intelligible and impressive to his contemporaries, the awful power of the principles by which he was impelled. Had he lived in the times and in the society of his infamous kinsmen, Borgia would not improbably have shared their disastrous renown. But his dependent nature, moulded by a far different influence, rendered him a canonized saint; an honourable, just and virtuous man; one of the most eminent ministers of a polity as benevolent in intention as it was gigantic in design; and the founder of a system of education pregnant with results of almost matchless importance. His miracles may be not disadvantageously compared with those of the Baron Manchausen; but it would be less easy to find a meet comparison for his genuine virtues. They triumph over all the silly legends and all the real follies which obscure his character. His whole mature life was but one protracted martyrdom, for the advancement of what he esteemed the perfection of his own nature, and the highest interests of his fellow-men. Though he maintained an intimate personal intercourse with Charles IX. and his mother, and enjoyed their highest favour, there is no reason to suppose that he was intrusted with their atrocious secret. Even in the land of the inquisition he had firmly refused to lend the influence of his name to that sanguinary tribunal; for there was nothing morose in his fanaticism, nor mean in his subservience. Such a man as Francis Borgia could hardly become a persecutor. His own church raised altars to his name. Other churches have neglected or despised it. In that all-wise and all-compassionate judgment, which is uninvaded by our narrow prejudices and by our unhallowed feelings, his fervent love of God and of man was doubtless permitted to cover the multitude of his theoretical errors and real extravagances. Human justice is severe, not merely because man is censorious, but because he reasonably distrusts himself, and fears lest his weakness should confound the distinctions of good and evil. Divine justice is lenient, because there alone love can flow in all its unfathomable depths and boundless expansion—impeded by no dread of error, and diverted by no misplaced sympathies.

To Ignatius, the founder of the order of the Jesuits; to Xavier, the great leader in their missionary enterprises; to Laynez, the author of their peculiar system of theology; and to Borgia, the architect of their system of education, two names are to be added to complete the roll of the great men from whose hands their institute received the form it retains to the present hour. These are Bellarmine, from whom they learned the arts and resources of controversy; and Acquaviva, the fifth in number, but in effect the fourth of their generals—who may be described as the Numa Pompilius of the order. There is in the early life of Bellarmine a kind of pastoral beauty, and even in his later days a grace, and a simplicity so winning, that it costs some effort to leave such a theme unattempted. The character of Acquaviva, one of the most memorable rulers and lawgivers of his age, it would be a still greater effort to attempt.

"Henceforth let no man say," (to mount on the stilts of dear old Samuel Johnson) "come, I will write a disquisition on the history, the doctrines, and the morality of the Jesuits—at least let no man say so who he has not subdued the lust of story-telling." Filled to their utmost limits, lie before us the sheets so recently destined to that ambitious enterprise. Perhaps it may be as well thus to have yielded to the allurement which has marred the original design. If in later days the disciples of Ignatius, obeying the laws of all human institutions, have exhibited the sure though slow developement of the seeds of error and of crime, sown by the authors of their polity, it must at least be admitted that they were men of no common mould. It is something to know that an impulse, which after three centuries is still unspent, proceeded from hands of gigantic power, and that their power was moral as much as intellectual, or much more so. In our own times much indignation and much alarm are thrown away on innovators of a very different stamp. From the ascetics of the common room, from men whose courage rises high enough only to hint at their unpopular opinions, and whose belligerent passions soar at nothing more daring than to worry some unfortunate professor, it is almost ludicrous to fear any great movement on the theatre of human affairs. When we see these dainty gentlemen in rags, and hear of them from the snows of the Himmalaya, we may begin to tremble. The slave of his own appetites, in bondage to conventional laws, his spirit emasculated by the indulgences, or corroded by the cares of life, hardly daring to act, to speak, or to think for himself, man—gregarious and idolatrous man—worships the world in which he lives, adopts its maxims, and tread its beaten paths. To rouse him from his lethargy, and to give a new current to his thoughts heroes appear from time to time on the verge of his horizon, and hero-worship, pagan or Christian, withdraws him for awhile from still baser idolatry. To contemplate the motives and the career of such a man, may teach much which well deserves the knowing; but nothing more clearly than this—that no one can have shrines erected to his memory in the hearts of men of distant generations unless his own heart was an altar on which daily sacrifices of fervent devotion, and magnanimous self denial, were offered to the only true object of human worship.

TAYLOR'S EDWIN THE FAIR.*

[Edinburgh Review, 1843.]

This is a dramatic poem full of life and beauty, thronged with picturesque groups, and with characters profoundly discriminated. They converse in language the most chaste, harmonious, and energetic. In due season fearful calamities strike down the lovely and the good. Yet "Edwin the Fair" is not to be classed among tragedies, in the full and exact sense of the expression.

"To purge the soul by pity and terror," it is not enough that the stage should exhibit those who tread the high places of the earth as victims either of unmerited distress, or of retributive justice. It is farther necessary that their sorrows should be deviations from the usual economy of human life. They must differ in their origin, and their character, from those ills which we have learned to regard as merely the established results of familiar causes. They must be attended by the rustling of the dark wings of fate, or by the still more awful march of an all-controlling Providence. The domain of the tragic theatre lies in that dim region where the visible and invisible worlds are brought into contact; and where the wise and the simple alike perceive and acknowledge a present deity, or demon. It is by the shocks and abrupt vicissitudes of fortune, that the dormant sense of our dependence on that inscrutable power in the grasp of which we lie, is quickened into life. It is during such transient dispersion of the clouds beneath which it is at other times concealed, that we feel the agency of heaven in the affairs of earth to be a reality and a truth. It is in such occurrences alone (distinguished in popular language from the rest, as providential) that the elements of tragedy are to be found in actual or imaginable combination. There the disclosure of the laws of the universal theocracy imparts to the scene an unrivalled interest, and to the actors in it the dignity of ministers of the will of the Supreme. There each event exhibits some new and sublime aspect of the divine energy working out the divine purposes. There the great enigmas of our existence, receive at least a partial solution. There, even amidst the seeming triumph of wrong, may be traced the dispensation of justice to which the dramatist is bound; and there also extends before his view a field of meditation drawn from themes of surpassing majesty and pathos.

Such is the law to which all the great tragic writers of ancient or of modern times have submitted themselves—each in his turn assuming this high office of interpreting the movements of Providence, and reconciling man to the mysteries of his being. Thus Job is the stoic of the desert—victorious over all the persecutions of Satan, till the better sense of unjust reproach and undeserved punishment breaks forth in agonies which the descending Deity rebukes, silences, and soothes. Prometheus is the temporary triumph over beneficence, of a power at once malignant and omnipotent, which, at the command of destiny, is blindly rushing on towards the universal catastrophe which is to overwhelm and ruin all things. Agamemnon returns in triumph to a home, where, during his long absence, the avenging furies have been couching to spring at last on the unhappy son of Atreus—every hand in that fated house drooping with gore, and every voice uttering the maledictions of the infernals. Œdipus, and his sons and daughters, represent a succession of calamities and crimes which would seem to exhaust the catalogue of human wretchedness; but each in turn is made to exhibit the working of one of the most awful of the laws under which we live—the visitation of the sins of parents upon their children to the third and fourth generation. Macbeth is seduced by demoniacal predictions to accomplish the purposes, by violating the commands of Heaven, and so to meditate, to extenuate, and to commit, the crimes suggested by the fiend in cruel mockery. Hamlet is at once the reluctant minister and the innocent victim of the retributive justice to the execution of which he is goaded by a voice from the world of departed spirits. Lear is crushed amidst the ruins of his house, on which parental injustice, filial impiety, foul lusts, and treacherous murder, had combined to draw down the curse of the avenger. Faust moves on towards destruction under the guidance of the fiend, who lures him by the pride of knowledge and the force of appetite. Wallenstein plunges into destruction, drawing down with him the faithful and the good, as a kind of bloody sacrifice, to atone for treachery to which the aspect of the stars and the predictions of the diviner had impelled him. And so, through every other tragic drama which has awakened the deeper emotions of the spectator or the reader, might be traced the operation of the law to which we have referred. How far this universal characteristic of tragedy—the perceptible intervention in human affairs of powers more than human—is to be discovered in "Edwin the Fair," the following brief and imperfect outline of the plot may sufficiently determine.

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* *Edwin the Fair: an Historical Drama.* By Henry Taylor, author of "Philip Van Artevelde." London: *12mo. 1842.*

In the fresh and dewy dawn of life, Edwin and Elgiva had been wont to rove—

> "O'er hill, through dale, with interlacing arms,
> And thrid the thickets where wild roses grow,
> Entangled with each other like themselves."

But their sun had scarcely risen above the eastern horizon when the dreams of childhood faded away before the illusions of youth. He ascended the Anglo-Saxon throne, and she plighted her troth to Earl Leolf, the commander of the English armies. The earl was "a man in middle age, busy and hard to please," and not happy in the art of pleasing. Such, at least, was the more deliberate opinion or feeling of Elgiva. In a day of evil augury to herself, and to her house, the inconstant maiden crushed the hopes of her grave, though generous suitor, to share the crown of her early playmate.

It sat neither firmly nor easily on his brows. Athulf, the brother, and Leolf, the discarded suitor of the queen, were the chief opponents of the powerful body which, under the guidance of Dunstan, were rapidly extending over the monarchy, and the Church of England, the authority of the monastic orders. In the approaching alliance of Athulf's family to Edwin, the abbot of Glastonbury foresaw the transfer, to a hostile party, of his own dominion over the mind of his young sovereign. Events had occurred to enhance and justify his solicitude. Athulf's energy had enabled Edwin to baffle the pretexts by which Dunstan had delayed his coronation. It was celebrated with becoming splendour, and was followed by a royal banquet. The moment appeared to the king propitious for avoiding the vigilant eye of his formidable minister. He escaped from the noisy revels, and flew on the wings of love to an adjacent oratory, where, before his absence had excited the notice and displeasure of his guests, he exchanged with Elgiva the vows which bound them to each other till death should break the bond. They little dreamed how soon it should thus be broken. Resenting the indignity of the king's abrupt desertion of the festive board, the assembled nobles deputed the abbot and the archbishop of Canterbury to solicit, and if necessary to compel his return. They found him in the society of his newly affianced bride, and assailed them with gross imputations, which she indignantly repelled by an open avowal of her marriage. Availing himself of the disorder of the moment, and of the canonical objections to their union, founded on their too near consanguinity, Dunstan caused them to be seized and imprisoned. Elgiva was despatched to Chester, the king and Athulf being secured in the Tower of London.

Leolf, who had absented himself from the coronation, was in command of the royal forces at Tunbridge, where he was quickly joined by Athulf, who had found the means of escaping from prison. The two earls then separated—Leolf proceeding to the north, with a part of the army, to rescue Elgiva, and Athulf assuming the conduct of the power destined for the deliverance of the king.

Whatever may have been the indignation of the confederate lords, their policy dictated pacific measures; and to these the archbishop, offended and alarmed by the audacity of Dunstan, willingly lent himself. He convened a synod to deliberate on the validity of the royal marriage, and on the propriety of applying to Rome for a dispensation. Long and fervent debate ensued. The church as represented in that holy conclave, had given strong indications of a conciliatory spirit, when, casting himself, in vehement prayer before a crucifix, Dunstan invoked the decision of Him whose sacred image it bore. An audible voice, which seemed to proceed from the cross, (though really uttered by a minister of the abbot's crimes, who had been concealed for the purpose within its ample cavity,) forbade the ratification of the royal nuptials. Rising from the earth, the holy abbot pronounced a solemn excommunication of Edwin, Elgiva, and their adherents, and dismissed the assembly which had so vainly attempted to defeat the will of heaven, and of heaven's chosen minister.

The triumphant Dunstan then proceeded to the Tower, to obtain from the captive and excommunicated king the abdication of his crown. He was answered by indignant reproaches, and at length withdrew, but not till he had summoned into the royal presence an assassin, prepared to bring the controversy to a decisive and bloody close. At that instant Athulf and his forces burst into the Tower. Edwin regained his freedom, and Dunstan fled in disguise into Hampshire.

But the saint of Glastonbury possessed too powerful a hold on the attachment and reverence of the multitude, to be thus defeated by any blow however severe, or by any exposture however disgraceful. A popular insurrection in his favour arrested his flight to France. He resumed his self-confidence, appeared again in his proper character, and lifted up his mitred front, with its wonted superiority, in a Wittenagemot which he convened at Malpas. There, surrounded by his adherents and his military retainers, he openly denounced war on his sovereign.

Under the guidance of Athulf, the king had moved from London towards Chester, to effect a junction with Leolf and his army. The attempt was not successful. Impatient of her prison, Elgiva had exercised over her jailer the spell of her rank and beauty, and had rendered him at once the willing instrument and the companion of her escape. Leolf was apprized of her design, and anxious for the safety of her who had so ill-requited his devotion, advanced to meet her, supported only by a small party of his personal attendants. They met, and, while urging their flight to Leolf's army, were overtaken by a party attached to the cause of Dunstan, and slain.

For this catastrophe Dunstan was not, in intention at least, responsible. Alarmed by intelligence of a Danish invasion, he had become desirous of a reconciliation with Edwin, and was making overtures for that purpose. But it was now too late. The king, maddened by the loss of Elgiva, rushed forward with blind and precipitate haste to Malpas, where the body of his murdered wife awaited a royal sepulture, and where was intrenched the haughty rebel who had brought her down to a premature grave. Deaf to every voice but that which from the inmost recesses of his soul cried for revenge, Edwin plunged wildly into his fate. Covered with wounds, he fell once more into the toils of his deadly enemy. An awful sound recalled him to momentary animation and strength. It was the low dirge from the choir of the neighbouring cathedral, chanting the funeral obsequies of Elgiva. He flew from his dying couch, cast himself with delirious ravings on her cold and inanimate form, and then, invoking the vengeance of heaven on their persecutor, descended with her to the grave.

Incomplete, and therefore inaccurate, as it is, this slight abridgment of the tale will show, that the dramatic action of "Edwin the Fair" is rather disastrous than tragical. We witness, indeed, the deadly conflict of thrones, spiritual and temporal. The sceptre falls from a feeble grasp, and the crozier is elevated in sanguinary triumph. But it is the triumph of power over weakness, of craft over simplicity, of mature worldly wisdom over childish inexperience. An overwhelming calamity befalls Edwin and Elgiva, but it is provoked neither by any gigantic guilt, nor by any magnanimous self-devotion. They perish, the victims of imprudence rather than of crime—of a rash marriage and a venial inconstancy. This is quite probable—quite in accordance with truths to be gathered from the experience of each passing day; but for that very reason, it is a fable which does not fulfil the laws imposed on the stage by Æschylus and Shakspeare—by their imitators and their critics—or rather by reason and nature herself. It does not break up our torpid habitual associations. It excites no intense sympathy. It gives birth to no deep emotion, except, indeed, regret that vengeance does not strike down the oppressor. There is a failure of poetical justice in the progress and in the catastrophe of the drama. If it were a passage of authentic history, the mind might repose in the conviction that the Judge of all must eventually do right. But as it is a fiction, it is impossible not to repine that right is not actually done. Such unmerited disasters and prosperous injustice are, we know, consistent with the presence of a superintending Deity. But they do not suggest it. The handwriting on the wall has no pregnant meaning, nor mythic significancy. It is not apparently traced by the Divine finger, nor has the seer given us any inspired interpretation. It is one of those legends from which a moralist might deduce important lessons of prudence, but from which a dramatist could hardly evoke a living picture of the destiny of man;—of man opposed and aided by powers mightier than his own, engaged in an unequal though most momentous conflict, impotent *even when* victorious, and majestic even when *subdued.*

This objection to the plot of his drama has evidently been anticipated by Mr. Taylor himself. He summons some dark clouds to gather around Dunstan at the moment of his success, and dismisses him from our view, oppressed by the only domestic sorrow to which his heart was accessible, and by omens of approaching calamity from an inroad of the Northmen. Thus the triumph of the wicked is tempered, and some endeavour is made to gratify, as well as to excite, the thirst for his punishment. It is hardly a successful attempt. The loss in mature life of an aged mother, is a sorrow too familiar and transitory to be accepted as a retribution for crimes of the deepest dye; and war, however disastrous to others, has seldom any depressing terrors for the rulers of mankind. Besides, there are yet some fetters, however light, which chronology will throw over the volatile spirit of poetry; and it is hard to forget the historical fact, that no Danish invasion ever disturbed the tranquillity of Dunstan; but that he lived and died in that century of repose, for which England was indebted to the wisdom and the valour of the two great predecessors of Edwin.

Mr. Taylor has therefore employed another and more effectual resource to relieve the inherent defects of the subject he has chosen. He avails himself of the opportunity it affords for the delineation and contrast of characters, which he throws off with a careless prodigality, attesting an almost inexhaustible affluence. In every passage where the interest of the story droops, it is sustained by the appearance of some new person of the drama, who is not a mere fiction, but a reality with a fictitious name. The stage is not possessed by its ancient tenants provided with a new set of speeches, but with recruits, who present some of the many aspects under which man has actually presented himself to a most sagacious and diligent observer. This, however, is not true of Dunstan, the most conspicuous of all those who contribute to the action or to the dialogue. He is drawn, not from actual life, but from books. In the great drama of society, which is acted in our age on the theatre of the civilized world, no part has been, or could be, assigned to a spiritual despot, in which to disclose freely the propensities and the mysteries of his nature. The poet has therefore taken the outline from the Anglo-Saxon chroniclers, and has supplied the details and the colouring from his own imagination. Hence the central figure is less congruous—less in harmony with itself—than those of the group by which it is surrounded; but then it is more ideal, is cast in bolder relief, and is thrown off with greater force and freedom.

The real Dunstan, the recluse, the saint, and the statesman of the tenth century, had his full share of the inconsistencies which distinguish man as he is, from man as he is painted. He was endowed with all the faculties by which great actions are achieved, and with the temperament without which they are never undertaken. Conversant in his early manhood with every science by which social life had then been improved, and by every art by which it had been embellished, his soul was agitated by ambition and by love. Unprosperous in both, his wounded spirit sought relief in solitude and penitential exercises; and an age familiar with such prodigies, regarded with astonishment and reverence the austerity of his self-discipline. When, at length, he emerged from the grave, (for in that similitude he had dug his cell,) he was supposed by others, and probably by himself, to have buried there all the tastes and the passions which had once enslaved him to the world. But other spirits as secular as the first, though assuming a holier garb, had entered his bosom, and taken up their abode there. All the energies once wasted on letters, music, painting, and science, or in the vain worship of her to whom his young heart had been devoted, were henceforth consecrated to the church and to his order. He became the foremost champion of sacerdotal celibacy and monastic retirement; assumed the conduct of the war of the regular against the secular clergy; and was the founder of the ecclesiastical system which continued for five centuries to control all the religious, and to affect all the political institutions of his native land.

But the Severn leaping down the rocks of Plinlimmon, and the same stream when expanded into a muddy and sluggish estuary, does not differ more from itself, than St. Dunstan, the abbot of Glastonbury, from Dunstan the metropolitan of the church, and the minister of the crown of England. During five successive reigns, all the powers of the government were in his hands, but he ruled ingloriously. When his supreme power had once been firmly secured, all the fire and genius of his earlier days became extinct. With the sublime example of Alfred, and the more recent glories of Athelstan before his eyes, he accomplished nothing and attempted nothing for the permanent welfare of his country. No one social improvement can be traced to his wisdom or munificence. He had none of the vast conceptions, and splendid aims, which have ennobled the usurpations of so many other churchmen. After an undisputed possession of power for forty years' continuance, he left the state enfeebled, and the crown in hopeless degradation. To him, more than to any man, must be ascribed the ruin of the dynasty under which he flourished, and the invasions which desolated the kingdom during half a century from his death. He had commanding talents and dauntless courage, but a low, narrow, selfish spirit. His place in the Roman calendar was justly assigned to him in acknowledgment of his incomparable services to the papacy; but he has no station in the calendar of the great and good men who, having consecrated the noblest gifts of nature and of fortune to their proper ends, live for the benefit of all generations, and are alike revered and celebrated by all.

The Dunstan of this tragedy is not the lordly churchman reposing in the plenitude of success, but the fanatic grasping at supreme command. He is the real hero of "Edwin the Fair," towering over all his associates, and distinguished from them all by a character, which, in the full and proper sense of the term, may be pronounced to be dramatic. He is at once the victim of religious misanthropy and self-adoration. He has worshipped the world, has been rejected by his idol, and has turned away mortified, but not humbled, to meditate holier joys, and to seek an eternal recompense. But, in the pursuit of these sublime objects, he is haunted by the memory of the delights he has abandoned, and of the injustice which has expelled him from the ways and the society of mankind. These thoughts distil their bitterness even into his devotions. His social affections droop and wither as their proper aliment is withdrawn. His irascible feelings deepen, and pass into habits of fixed antipathy and moroseness. To feed these gloomy passions he becomes the calumniator of his species, incredulous of human virtue, and astute in every uncharitable construction of human motives. His malignity establishes a disastrous alliance with his disordered piety. He ascribes to the Being he adores the foul passions which fester in his own bosom. His personal wrongs are no longer the insignificant ills of an individual sufferer, nor have his personal resentments the meanness of a private revenge—for his foes are antagonists of the purposes of heaven; and to crush them can be no unacceptable homage to the Supreme Arbiter of rewards and punishments. With the cold unsocial propensities of a withered heart, disguised from others and from himself by the sophistries of a palsied conscience, Dunstan finds his way back to the busy world. He lives among men to satiate an ambition such as might be indulged by an incarnation of the evil spirit—an ambition exulting in conscious superiority, and craving for the increase and the display of it, but spurning and trampling in the dust the victims over whom it triumphs. Patriotism, loyalty, humility, reverence—every passion by which man is kind to his brethren—all are dead in him; and an intense selfishness, covered by holy pretexts, reigns in undisputed sovereignty in his soul. Man is but the worthless instrument of his will; and even to his Creator he addresses himself with the unawed familiarity of a favourite. Proud, icy-cold, and remorseless, he wades through guilt sneeringly and exultingly—the subject of a strange spiritual disease, compounded of a paralysis of all the natural sympathies, and a morbid vigour of all the mental energies. This portrait is terrible, impressive, and (unhappily) not improbable. It labours, however, under one inconsistency.

The fanaticism of Dunstan, as delineated in this tragedy, is wanting in one essential element. He has no profound or deeply cherished convictions. He does not believe himself to be the selected depositary of divine truth. He does not regard dissent from his own opinions as criminal; nor does he revel in any vindictive anticipations of the everlasting wo of his theological antagonists. He is not clinging to any creed which, if rejected by others, may elude his own grasp. The enemies of the church are indeed his enemies; but they are so because they endanger his power, not because they disturb the repose or the self-complacency of his mind. He has (to borrow the distinction of a great writer) the fanaticism of the scourge, the brand, and the sword, without having the fanaticism of the creed. He is a fanatic, without being an enthusiast. His guilt is not extenuated by any passionate attachment for truth or sanctity, or for what he believes to be true and sacred. He rushes into oppression, treachery, fraud, and plunder, not at the impulse of a disordered imagination, but at the bidding of a godless, brotherless heart.

This absence of theological hatred, founded on the earnest attachment to some theological opinions, impairs both the congruity and the terror of Dunstan's dramatic character. He is actuated by no passion intense enough to provoke such enormous guilt; or familiar enough to bring him within the range of our sympathies; or natural enough to suggest, that some conceivable shifting of the currents of life might hurry us into some plunge as desperate as that which we see him making. His homicides are not bloody sacrifices, but villanous murders. His scourge is not the thong of Dominic, so much as the lash with which Sancho (the knave!) imposes on the credulity of his master. His impious frauds are not oracular deceptions, but the sleight-of-hand tricks of a juggler. He is waited on by an imp of darkness, who is neither man nor fiend; for he perpetrates the foulest crime, without malignity, or cupidity, or any other obvious motive. He slaughters Elgiva and Leolf; raises his hand to assassinate the king; and, at Dunstan's command, climbs a tree, to howl there like the devil; and then enters the cavity of the crucifix, to utter a solemn response in the person of the Redeemer.

The objection to this is not the improbability, but the revolting hatefulness of the guilt which Dunstan and his minister divide between them. Unhappily it is not historically improbable, but the reverse. Sanguinary and devious have been the paths along which many a canonized saint has climbed that celestial eminence. Tricks, as base and profane as that of Dunstan's crucifix, have been exhibited or encouraged, not merely by the vulgar heroes, but by some of the most illustrious fathers of the church. But if they violated the eternal laws of God, it was to accomplish what they devoutly believed to be the divine will. Saints and sinners might agree in the means to be used, but they differed entirely as to the ends to be accomplished. Ambrose, preaching at Milan over the bleeding remains of the disinterred martyrs, lent himself to what he must have suspected or known to be a lie. But the lie was told and exhibited for the confutation of the Arians, to which holy object Ambrose would as readily have sacrificed his life. And though evil done that good may come, be evil still—nay, an evil peculiarly pestilent and hard to be forgiven—yet there is, after all, a wide difference between Bishop Bonner and Jonathan Wilde. Devout fanaticism, if it may not extenuate, does at least sublimate crime. By the intensity of his convictions, the greatness of his aims, and the energy of his motives, the genuine fanatic places himself beyond the reach of contempt, of disgust, or of unmixed abhorrence. We feel that, by the force of circumstances, the noblest of men might be betrayed into such illusions, and urged into such guilt as his. We acknowledge that, under happy auspices, he might have been the benefactor, not the curse of his species. We perceive that, if his erring judgment could be corrected, he might even yet be reclaimed to philanthropy and to peace. If we desire that retributive justice should overtake him, the aspiration is, that he may fall "a victim to the gods," and not be hewed as "a carcass for the hounds." Not such is the vengeance we invoke on the dramatic Dunstan and his ministering demon. We upbraid the tardiness of human invention, which laboured a thousand years in the discovery of the treadmill. Or rather our admiration of the genius which created so noble an image of intellectual power, ruthless decision, and fearful hardihood, is alloyed by some resentment that the poet should so have marred the work of his own hands. How noble a work it is will be best understood by listening to the soliloquy in which Dunstan communes with his own heart, and with his Maker, on the commission intrusted to him, and on the spiritual temptations he has to encounter in the discharge of it:

"Spirit of speculation, rest, oh rest!
And push not from her place the spirit of prayer!
God, thou'st given unto me a troubled being—
So move upon the face thereof, that light
May be, and be divided from the darkness!
Arm thou my soul that I may smite and chase
The spirit of that darkness, whom not I
But Thou thro' me compellest.—Mighty power,
Legions of piercing thoughts illuminate,
Hast Thou committed to my large command,
Weapons of light and radiant shafts of day,
And steeds that trample on the tumbling clouds.
But with them it hath pleased Thee to let mingle
Evil imaginations, corporeal stings,
A host of imps and Ethiops, dark doubts,
Suggestions of revolt.—Who is't that dares?"

In the same spirit, at once exulting, self-exploring, and irreverent, Dunstan bursts out in a sort of pæan on his anticipated success, as he enters the tower to persuade the abdication of his sovereign.

"Kings shall bow down before thee, said my soul,
And it is even so. Hail, ancient Hold!
Thy chambers are most cheerful, though the light
Enter not freely; for the eye of God
Smiles in upon them. Cherish'd by His smile
My heart is glad within me, and to Him
Shall testify in works a strenuous joy.
—Methinks that I could be myself that rock
Whereon the Church is founded,—wind and flood
Beating against me, boisterous in vain.
I thank you, Gracious Powers! Supernal Host!
I thank you that on me, though young in years,
Ye put the glorious charge to try with fire,
To winnow and to purge. I hear you call!
A radiance and a resonance from Heaven
Surrounds me, and my soul is breaking forth
In strength, as did the new-created Sun
When Earth beheld it first on the fourth day.
God spake not then more plainly to that orb
Than to my spirit now. I hear the call.
My answer, God, and Earth, and Hell shall hear.
But I could reason with thee, Gracious Power,
For that thou givest me to perform thy work
Such sorry instruments."

The spirit thus agitated had not always been a prey to disquieting thoughts. Dunstan had once loved as other men love, and even on his seared heart were engraven recollections which revive in all their youthful warmth and beauty as he contemplates the agonies of his captive king, and tempts him to abdicate his crown by the prospect of his reunion to Elgiva.

> "When Satan first
> Attempted me, 'twas in a woman's shape;
> Such shape as may have erst misled mankind,
> When Greece or Rome uprear'd with Pagan rites
> Temples to Venus, pictured there or carved
> With rounded, polish'd, and exuberant grace,
> And mien whose dimpled changefulness betray'd,
> Thro' jocund hues, the seriousness of passion.
> I was attempted thus, and Satan sang,
> With female pipe and melodies that thrill'd
> The soften'd soul, of mild voluptuous ease,
> And tender sports that chased the kindling hours
> In odorous gardens or on terraces,
> To music of the fountains and the birds,
> Or else in skirting groves by sunshine smitten,
> Or warm winds kiss'd, whilst we from shine to shade
> Roved unregarded. Yes, 'twas Satan sang,
> Because 'twas sung to me, whom God had call'd
> To other pastime and severer joys.
> But were it not for this, God's strict behest
> Enjoin'd upon me,—had I not been vow'd
> To holiest service rigorously required,
> I should have owned it for an Angel's voice,
> Nor ever could an earthly crown, or toys
> And childishness of vain ambition, gauds
> And tinsels of the world, have lured my heart
> Into the tangle of those mortal cares
> That gather round a throne. What call is thine
> From God or man, what voice within bids thee
> Such pleasures to forego, such cares confront?

Dunstan is a superb sophister. Observe with what address he reconciles himself to the fraud so coarse and degrading as that of making his instrument, Gurmo, shake the forest with dismal howlings, to intimate to the passers-by that the hour of fierce conflict between the saint and the prince of darkness had arrived. Contempt of mankind, and of his supposed adversary, are skilfully called up to still the voice of honour and the remonstrances of conscience.

> "And call'st thou this a fraud, thou secular lack-brain?
> Thou loose lay-priest, I tell thee it is none.
> Do I not battle wage in very deed
> With Satan? Yea, and conquer! And who's he
> Saith falsehood is deliver'd in these howls,
> Which do but to the vulgar ear translate
> Truths else to them ineffable? Where's Satan?
> His presence, life and kingdom? Not the air
> Nor bowels of the earth, nor central fires
> His habitat exhibits; it is here,
> Here in the heart of Man. And if from hence
> I cast him with discomfiture, that truth
> Is verily of the vulgar sense conceived,
> By utterance symbolic, when they deem
> That, met in bodily oppugnancy,
> I tweak him by the snout. A fair belief
> Wherein the fleshy and the palpable type
> Doth of pure truth substantiate the essence.
> Enough. Come down. The screech-owl from afar
> Upbraids thy usurpations. Cease, I say."

It is with admirable truth and insight into human character that Dunstan is made to resort to artifices, as various as the occasions suggesting them, to evade the expostulations with which conscience still tracks him in the path of guilt. From scorn of man he passes to a kind of adoration of the mystical abstract Being, to which, in the absence of more palpable idols, it is so easy to render an extravagant homage. What a labyrinth of gigantic, vague, half-conceited images is it into which he plunges, in the endeavour to sustain his own mind, by contemplating the majesty and the holiness of the impersonation in the cause of which he is willing to believe himself engaged.

> "The Church is great,
> Is holy, is ineffably divine!
> Spiritually seen, and with the eye of faith,
> The body of the Church, lit from within,
> Seems but the luminous phantom of a body;
> The incorporeal spirit is all in all.
> Eternity *a parte post et ante*
> So drinks the refuse, thins the material fibre
> That lost in ultimate tenuity
> The actual and the mortal lineaments,
> The Church and Time, the meagre, definite, bare,
> Ecclesiastical anatomy,
> The body of this death translates itself,
> And glory upon glory swallowing all
> Makes earth a scarce distinguishable speck
> In universal heaven. Such is the Church
> As seen by faith; but otherwise regarded,
> The body of the Church it search'd in vain
> To find the seat of the soul; for it is nowhere.
> Here are two Bishops, but 'tis not in them."

To the dramatic character of Dunstan, the antithesis is that of Wulfstan the Wise. An idealist arrested in the current of life by the eddy of his own thoughts, he muses away his existence in one long, though ever-shifting dream of labours to be undertaken, and duties to be performed. Studious of books, of nature, of the heart, and of the ways of man, his intellectual wealth feeds a perennial stream of discourse, which, meandering through every field of speculation, and in turns enriching all, still changes the course it ought to pursue, or overflows the banks by which it should be confined, as often as any obstacle is opposed to its continuous progress. Love, poetry, friendship, philosophy, war, politics, morals, and manners, each is profoundly contemplated, eloquently discussed, and helplessly abandoned, by this master of ineffectual wisdom: and yet he is an element in society which could be worse spared than the shrewdest practical understanding in the camp or the exchange. His wide circuit of meditation has made him catholic, charitable, and indulgent. In the large horizon which his mental eye traverses, he discerns such comprehensive analogies, such countless indications of the creative goodness, and such glorious aspects of beauty and of grace, as no narrower ken could embrace, and no busier mind combine and harmonize. To form such combinations, and to scatter prodigally around him the germs of thought, if happily they may bear fruit in intellects better disciplined, though less opulent than his own, is the delight and the real duty of Wulfstan, the colloquial. His talk, when listeners are to be had, thus becomes a ceaseless exercise of kindness; and even when there are none to heed him, an imaginary circle still enables him to soliloquize most benevolently. In this munificent diffusion of his mental treasures, the good man is not merely happy, but invulnerable! Let fortune play her antics as she will, each shall furnish him with a text; and he will embellish all with quaint conceits or diagnostic expositions. His daughter steals an unworthy match; but he rebounds from the shock to moralize on parental disappointment and conjugal constancy. He is overborne and trampled down by the energy of Dunstan, and immediately discovers in his misadventure a proof how well the events of his own age are adapted for history; and how admirably a retirement to Oxford will enable himself to become the historian. Could Samuel Taylor

Coleridge have really thus blossomed in the iron age of the Anglo-Saxons? It is a hard problem. But the efflorescence of his theatrical representative is rendered probable to all who ever performed the pilgrimage to the Hierophant at Highgate, in the golden era of George IV. Never was there a group of auditors better disposed or better able to appreciate the wisdom of a sage, than those who are collected round Wulfstan. See with what fine discrimination and keen relish his portrait is sketched by one of them.

"Still
This life and all that it contains, to him
Is but a tissue of illuminous dreams
Fill'd with book wisdom, pictured thought, and love
That on its own creations spends itself.
All things he understands, and nothing does.
Profusely eloquent in copious praise
Of action, he will talk to you as one
Whose wisdom lay in dealings and transactions;
Yet so much action as might tie his shoe
Cannot his will command; himself alone
By his own wisdom not a jot the gainer.
Of silence, and the hundred thousand things
'Tis better not to mention, he will speak,
And still most wisely—But, behold! he comes."

Leolf, who thus delineates the character of Wulfstan, is about to announce to the old man the secret marriage of his daughter; and as the earl cautiously approaches the unwelcome topic, the philosopher finds in each turn of the discourse some theme which hurries him away to a boundless distance from the matter in hand. Obeying the law by which his own ideas are associated, but with the tendency observable in all dreamers, sleeping or waking, to reconcile the vision with any suggestion from without, he involves himself in an inquiry how a man in middle life should wed, and on that critical topic thus makes deliverance:

"Love changes with the changing life of man:
In its first youth, sufficient to itself,
Heedless of all beside, it reigns alone,
Revels or storms, and spends itself in passion.
In middle age—a garden through whose soil
The roots of neighbouring forest-trees have crept—
It strikes on stringy customs bedded deep,
Perhaps on alien passions; still it grows
And lacks not force nor freshness: but this age
Shall aptly choose as answering best its own,
A love that clings not, nor is exigent,
Encumbers not the active purposes,
Nor drains their source; but proffers with free grace
Pleasure at pleasure touch'd, at pleasure waved
A washing of the weary traveller's feet,
A quenching of his thirst, a sweet repose
Alternate and preparative, in groves
Where loving much the flower that loves the shade,
And loving much the shade that that flower loves,
He yet is unbewilder'd, unenslaved,
Thence starting light, and pleasantly let go,
When serious service calls."

Mr. Shandy's expenditure of eloquence on the death of his son, was not more consolatory to the bereaved rhetorician, than are the disquisitions of Wulfstan on his daughter's undutiful marriage. She must no longer be mutable of purpose. She must study the excellent uses of constancy, and abide in quietude of mind. The fickle wind may be her teacher. Then, as if himself floating on the wings of some soft and balmly gale, the poetical sage drowns all his parental anxieties in this light and beautiful parable:

"The wind, when first he rose and went abroad
Thro' the vast region, felt himself at fault,
Wanting a voice; and suddenly to earth
Descended with a wafture and a swoop,
Where, wandering volatile from kind to kind,
He woo'd the several trees to give him one.
First he besought the ash; the voice she lent
Fitfully with a free and lashing change
Flung here and there its sad uncertainties:
The aspen next; a fluttered frivolous twitter
Was her sole tribute: from the willow came,
So long as dainty summer dress'd her out,
A whispering sweetness, but her winter note
Was hissing, dry, and reedy: lastly the pine
Did he solicit, and from her he drew
A voice so constant, soft, and lowly deep,
That here he rested, welcoming in her
A mild memorial of the ocean cave
Where he was born."

The spirit of rumination possesses all the persons of this drama. No wonder, then, that Leolf feeds on his own thoughts, as best becomes a discarded lover. But of that deplorable class of mankind, he is a remarkable, if not altogether a new variety. He had climbed the central arch and in the bridge of life, painfully conscious of the solitude of his heart in the midst of the busy crowd, and cherishing a vague but earnest desire for deliverance. An ideal form, lovely as the day-spring, and radiant with love to him, haunted his path, and he lived in the faith that the bright reality would at length be disclosed, when his spirit should know the blessedness of that union which mystically represents to man the design and the perfection of his being. She came, or seemed to come, in the form of Elgiva—the glorious impersonation of that dazzling fantasy—the actual fulfilment of many a dream, too fondly courted by his solemn and overburdened mind. Nature had made her beautiful, and, even when the maiden's ruby lips were closed, her beaming eye and dimpled cheek gave utterance to thoughts, now more joyous or impassioned, now more profound or holy, than any which could be imparted through the coarser vehicle of articulate speech. So judged the enamoured interpreter of that fair tablet—mistaking for emanations of her mind the glowing hues reflected by the brilliant surface from his own. He threw over the object of his homage all the most rich and graceful draperies stored in the wardrobe of his own pensive imagination; unconsciously worshipped the creature of his own fancy; and adorned her with a diadem which, though visible to him alone, had for a true heart a greater value than the proudest crown which could be shared with kings.

Such was not Elgiva's judgment. Her ear drank in the flatteries of Edwin; nor had he long to sue for the hand which had been plighted to the champion and defender of his throne. A ready vengeance was in the grasp of Leolf. One word from him would have sealed the doom of his successful rival. But no such words passed his lips. In his solitude he probes the incurable wound which had blighted all the hopes, and dispelled all the illusions of life. He broods with melancholy intentness over the bleak prospect, and drains to the dregs the bitter cup of irremediable desolation. But in his noble spirit there is no place for scorn, resentment, or reproach. His duty, though it be to protect with his life the authors of his wretchedness, is performed in the true spirit of duty;—quietly, earnestly, and without vaunt or ostentation. He has sympathy to spare for the sorrows of others, while demanding none for his own. He extenuates with judicial rectitude and calmness Elgiva's infidelity to himself, and loyally dies to restore her to the arms of her husband.

Leolf is the portrait of a man in whose mind justice, in the largest conception of the word, exercises an undisputed sway;—silencing, though it cannot assuage, the deepest sorrow, representing all the importunities of self-love, restraining every severe and uncharitable censure, and exciting the faithful, though unrequited, discharge of all the obligations of loyalty, and love, and honour. The world in which we live abounds in models, which may have suggested, by the power of contrast, this image of a statesman and a soldier. Haughty self-assertion is not merely pardoned in our public men, but takes its place among their conventional virtues. We are accustomed to extol that exquisite sensitiveness which avenges every wrong, and repels every indignity, even though the welfare of our common country be the sacrifice. To appreciate the majesty of a mind which, in the most conspicuous stations of life, surrenders itself to the guidance of perfect equity—and of humility, the offspring of equity; which has mastered resentment and pride as completely as all the baser passions—we must turn from the real to the mimetic theatre, and study man not as he actually is, in camps and parliaments, but as he is here exhibited on the stage.

Relieved from attendance on his feeble sovereign and faithless queen, Leolf (a great soliloquist) takes his stand on the sea-shore, and thus gives utterance to the thoughts which disappointment had awakened in his melancholy, though well-balanced mind:

"Rocks that beheld my boyhood! Perilous shelf
That nursed my infant courage! Once again
I stand before you—not as in other days
In your gray faces smiling—but like you
The worse for weather. Here again I stand,
Again, and on the solitary shore
Old ocean plays as on an instrument,
Making that ancient music, when not known?
That ancient music only not so old
As He who parted ocean from dry land
And saw that it was good. Upon my ear,
As in the season of susceptive youth,
The mellow murmur falls—but finds the sense
Dull'd by distemper; shall I say—by time?
Enough in action has my life been spent
Through the past decade, to rebate the edge
Of early sensibility. The sun
Rides high, and on the thoroughfares of life
I find myself a man in middle age,
Busy and hard to please. The sun shall soon
Dip westerly,—but oh! how little like
Are life's two twilights! Would the last were first
And the first last! that so we might be soothed
Upon the thoroughfares of busy life
Beneath the noon day sun, with hope of joy
Fresh as the morn,—with hope of breaking lights,
Illuminated mists, and spangled lawns,
And woodland orisons, and unfolding flowers,
As things in expectation.—Weak of faith!
Is not the course of earthly outlook, thus
Reversed from Hope, an argument to Hope
That she was licensed to the heart of man
For other than for earthly contemplations,
In that observatory domiciled
For survey of the stars?"

It is in his last interview with Elgiva that the character of Leolf is best exhibited. He has rescued her from captivity, and, during a transient pause in her flight with him to Edwin, the inconstant queen expresses her gratitude, and suggests her contrition. It is a scene of pathos and dignity which we should rejoice to transfer into our pages, but which would be impaired by abridgment, and is too long for quotation as it stands.

If Leolf is the example of the magnanimous endurance of the ills of life, Athulf, his friend and brother soldier, is the portrait of a man born to encounter and to baffle them. It is drawn with the elaborate care, and touched and retouched with the parental fondness with which authors cherish, and sometimes enervate, their favoured progeny. Unfortunately, Athulf is surrounded by a throng of dramatic persons, who afford him no sufficient space for action or for speech. We become acquainted with him chiefly by observing the impression he leaves on the minds of his associates, his enemies, and his friends. Wulfstan the Wise is one of these; and he will describe Athulf with a warmth and vigour which it is impossible to emulate, although it must be admitted to be not inconsiderably abstruse—an infirmity to which the good Wulfstan is greatly addicted.

"Much mirth he hath, and yet less mirth than fancy.
His is that nature of humanity
Which both ways doth redound, rejoicing now
With soarings of the soul, anon brought low:
For such the law that rules the larger spirits.
This soul of man, this elemental crisis,
Completed, should present the universe
Abounding in all kinds; and unto all
One law is common,—that their act and reach
Stretch'd to the farthest is resilient ever,
And in resilience hath its plenary force.
Against the gust remitting fiercelier burns
The fire, than with the gust it burnt before.
The richest mirth, the richest sadness too,
Stands from a groundwork of its opposite;
For these extremes upon the way to meet
Take a wide sweep of Nature, gathering in
Harvests of sundry seasons."

With Dunstan, Leolf, Wulfstan, and Athulf, are associated a rich variety of other characters—some elaborately, some slightly, sketched—and some exhibited in that rapid outline which is designed to suggest, rather than to portray the image which occupies the poet's fancy. There is Odo, the archbishop, the sport of the winds and currents, into which this victim of dignity and circumstances is passively borne—a sort of *rouge dragon*, or *clarencieux* king-at-arms, hurried by some misadventure in feats of real chivalry, with nothing but tabard and mantle to oppose to the sharp sword and heavy battle-axe;—and Clarenbald, by office a lord chancellor, a pompous patronizing appendage of royalty, who, in an age of war and treason, and amidst the clash of arms, is no better than a kind of master of the ceremonies in the *Aula Regia*;—and Ruold, a hair-brained gallant, whom the frown of a polished brow, or the smile of a dimpled cheek, will mould to the fair one's purposes, though faith, life, and honour should be the forfeit:—and Edwin himself, the slave in turn of every passion which assails him, love, anger, despondency, impatience, and revenge, ever wasting his energies to no purpose, and playing the fool with the indefeasible dignity of him who at once wears and worships an hereditary crown; and Elgiva, the storm-compelling beauty, who sets a world in flames, and who has proceeded from the hands of her dramatic creator with a character entirely neutral and unformed; in order that all may ascribe to her such fascinations as may best explain to each the mystery of her influence over the weak and the wise, the feeble and the resolute;—and Emma, a damsel whose virtue (for she is virtuous and good, and firm of heart) is but little indebted to her discretion; for the maiden is possessed by the spirit of intrigue and intermeddling, and, at his bidding, assumes by turns the disguises of a wife, of a strolling minstrel, and of a priest, to disentangle the webs which she has spun; and there are military leaders and ecclesiastics, fortune-tellers, and scholars, jesters, swineherds, and foresters—to each of whom is assigned some share in the dialogue or in the plot—which glows like the firmament with stars of every magnitude, clustering into constellations of endless variety.

This crowding of the scene at once conduces to the beauty, and impairs the interest of this drama. If our arithmetic fail us not, there appear on the stage not fewer than fifty interlocutors, who jostle and cross each other—impede the development of the fable, and leave on the mind of the reader, or of the spectator, an impression at once indistinct and fatiguing. It is not till after a second or a third perusal, that the narrative or succession of events emerges distinctly from the throng of the doings and the sayings. But each successive return to this drama brings to light, with a still increasing brilliancy, the exquisite structure of the verse, the manly vigour of thought, and the deep wisdom to which it gives most musical utterance; the cordial sympathy of the poet with all that is to be loved and revered in our common nature, and his no less generous antipathy for all that debases and corrupts it; his sagacious and varied insight into the chambers of imagery in the human heart; and the all-controlling and faultless taste which makes him intuitively conscious of the limits which separate the beautiful from the false, the extravagant, and the affected.

A great writer is his own most formidable rival. If "Edwin the Fair," shall fail of due acceptance, it will be more to "Philip Van Artevelde" than to any other hostile critic that such ill success will be really owing. Mr. Taylor has erected a standard by which he must be measured and judged. The sect of the Takersdown is a large and active fraternity, among whom there are never wanting some to speak of powers impaired, and of exhausted resources. Untrue, in fact, as such a censure would be, it would not be quite destitute of plausibility. "Philip Van Artevelde" has a deeper and more concentrated interest than "Edwin the Fair." It approaches far more nearly to the true character of tragedy. Virtues, hazardous in their growth, majestic in their triumph, and venerable even in the fall, shed a glory round the hero, with which the guilt and the impunity of Dunstan form a *painful contrast.* The scene of the play, moreover, is more warm and genial, and the versification flows more easily, and in closer resemblance to the numerous prose of Massinger and of Fletcher. There is also less of the uniformity which may be observed in the style of "Edwin," where churchmen, laics, and ladies, are all members of one family, and have all the family failing, of talking philosophy. The idle king himself moralizes not a little; and even the rough huntsman pauses to compare the fawning of his dogs with the flatteries of the court. But if the earlier work be the greater drama, the latter is assuredly the greater poem. More abundant mental resources of every kind are there—knowledge more comprehensive—an imagination at once more prompt and more discursive—the ear tuned to a keener sense of harmony—the points of contact and sympathy with the world multiplied—and the visible traces of that kind influence which passing years have obviously shed on a mind always replete with energy and courage, but which has not, till now, given proof that it was informed in an equal degree by charity, benevolence, and compassion.

It is, indeed, rather as a poet than as a dramatist that Mr. Taylor claims the suffrage of those with whom it rests to confer the high reward of his labours. In a memorable essay, prefixed to his former tragedy, he explained and vindicated, not his dramatic but his poetical creed, and then, as now, proceeded to illustrate his own doctrines. To the credit of having discovered any latent truth, or of having unfolded any new theory of the sublime art he pursues, he, of course, made no pretension. It would have been utterly at variance with the robust sense which is impressed on every page he writes. His object was to refute a swarm of popular sectarians, by proclaiming anew the ancient and Catholic faith. As the first postulate of his argument, he laid it down, that if a man would write well, either with rhythm or without it, behooved him to have something to say. From this elementary truth, he proceeded to the more abstruse and questionable tenet, that "no man can be a very great poet who is not also a great philosopher."

To what muse the highest honour is justly due, and what exercises of the poetic faculty ought to command, in the highest degree, the reverence of mankind, are problems not to be resolved without an inquiry into various recondite principles. But it is a far less obscure question what is the poetry which men do really love, ponder, commit to memory, incorporate into the mass of their habitual thoughts, digest as texts, or cherish as anodynes. This is a matter of fact, which Paternoster Row, if endowed with speech, could best determine. It would be brought to a decision, if some literary deluge (in the shape, for example, of a prohibitory book-tax) should sweep over the land—consigning to the abyss our whole poetical patrimony, and all the treasures of verse accumulated in our own generation. In that frightful catastrophe, who are the poets whom pious hands would be stretched out to save? The philosophical? They would sink unheeded, with Lucretius at their head. Or the allegorical? The waves would close unresistingly over them, though the Faery Queen herself should be submerged. Or the descriptive? Windsor Forest and Grongar Hill would disappear, with whole galleries of inferior paintings. Or the witty? In such a tempest even Hudibras would not be rich enough to attract the zeal of the Salvors. Or the moral? Essays on man, with an infinite variety of the "pleasures" of man's intellectual faculties, would sink unwept in the vast whirlpool. There, too, would perish, Lucan, with a long line of heroic cantos, romances in verse, and rhymes—amorous, fantastic, and bacchanalian. But, at whatever cost or hazard, leaves would be snatched, in that universal wreck, from the digressions and interstitial passages of the three great epics of Greece, Italy, and England. The bursts of exultation and agony in the "Agamemnon" would be rescued; with some of the anthologies, and a few of the odes of Anacreon and Horace. There would be a sacred emulation to save, from the all-absorbing flood, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso;" with the "Odes and Fables of Dryden," "Henry and Emma," the "Rape of the Lock," and "the Epistle to Abelard;" Gray's Bard," and "Elegy," Lord Lyttleton's "Monody," "The Traveller," "The Deserted Village," and "The Task," Mr. Campbell's Shorter Poems, and some of Mr. Wordsworth's Sonnets; while the very spirit of martyrdom would be roused for the preservation of Burns, and the whole Shakspearian theatre; ballads and old songs out of number; much devotional psalmody, and, far above all the rest, the inspired songs of the sweet singer of Israel.

No man, says Dr. Johnson, is a hypocrite in his pleasures. At school we learn by heart the *De Arte Poeticâ*. At college we are lectured in the poetics. Launched into the wide world, we criticise or write, as it may happen, essays on the sublime and beautiful. But on the lonely sea-shore, or river-bank, or in the evening circle of family faces, or when the hearth glows on the silent chamber round which a man has ranged the chosen companions of his solitary hours, with which of them does he really hold the most frequent and grateful intercourse? Is it not with those who best give utterance to his own feelings, whether gay or mournful; or who best enable him to express the otherwise undefinable emotions of the passing hour? Philosophy is the high privilege of a few, but the affections are the birthright of all. It was an old complaint, that when wisdom lifted up her voice in the streets, none would regard it; but when was the genuine voice of passion ever unheeded? It is the universal language. It is the speech intelligible to every human being, though spoken, with any approach to perfection, by that little company alone, who are from time to time inspired to reveal man to himself, and to sustain and multiply the bonds of the universal brotherhood. It is a language of such power as to reject the aid of ornament, fulfilling its object best when it least strains and taxes the merely intellectual faculties. The poets, whom men secretly worship, are distinguished from the rest, not only by the art of ennobling common subjects; but by the rarer gift of imparting beauty to common thoughts, interest to common feelings, and dignity to common speech. True genius of this order can never be vulgar, and can, therefore, afford to be homely. It can never be trite, and can, therefore, pass along the beaten paths.

What philosophy is there in the wail of Cassandra? in the last dialogue of Hector and Andromache? in Gray's "Elegy?" or in the Address to "Mary in Heaven?" And yet when did philosophy ever appeal to mankind in a voice equally profound? About four-and-twenty years ago Mr. Wolfe established a great and permanent reputation by half a dozen stanzas. Almost as many centuries have passed since the great poetess of Greece effected a similar triumph with as small an expenditure of words. Was Mr. Wolfe a philosopher, or was Sappho? They were simply poets, who could set the indelible impress of genius on what all the world had been feeling and saying before. They knew how to appropriate for ever to themselves a combination of thoughts and feelings, which, except in the combination, have not a trace of novelty, nor the slightest claim to be regarded as original. In shorter terms, they knew how to write heart language.

A large proportion of the material of which the poetry of David, Æschylus, Homer, and Shakspeare is composed, if presented for use to many of our greatest writers in its unwrought and unfashioned state, would infallibly be rejected as common-place, and unworthy of all regard. Our poets must now be philosophers; as Burke has taught all our prose writers, and most of our prosaic speakers to be, at least in effort and desire. Hence it is that so large a part of poetry which is now published is received as worthy of all admiration, but not of much love—is praised in society, and laid aside in solitude—is rewarded by an undisputed celebrity, but not by any heartfelt homage—is heard as the discourse of a superior, but not as the voice of a brother.

The diligent students and cultivated admirers of poetry will assign to the author of "Edwin the Fair" a rank second to none of the competitors for the laurel in his own generation. They will celebrate the rich and complex harmony of his metre, the masculine force of his understanding, the wide range of his survey of life and manners, and the profusion with which he can afford to lavish his intellectual resources. The mere lovers of his art will complain, that in the consciousness of his own mental wealth, he forgets the prevailing poverty; that he levies too severe a tribute of attention, and exacts from a thoughtless world meditations more deep, and abstractions more prolonged, than they are able or willing to command. Right or wrong, it is but as the solace of the cares, and as an escape from the lassitude of life, that most men surrender their minds to the fascination of poetry; and they are not disposed to obey the summons to arduous thinking, though proceeding from a stage resplendent with picturesque forms, and resounding with the most varied harmonies. They will admit that the author of "Edwin the Fair," can both judge as a philosopher, and feel as a poet; but will wish that his poetry had been less philosophical, or his philosophy less poetical. It is a wish which will be seconded by those who revere his wisdom, and delight in his genius; and who, therefore, regret to anticipate that his labours will hardly be rewarded by an early or an extensive popularity.

THE END.

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